ALIGN TOOLS | PLUG-INS | PHOTO EDITING | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS

Free CD inside

Photoshop® creative

The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® inspiration and advice

Inside

Photoshop techniques
Plenty of guides to help you take control of Photoshop

Work with raw files
Enjoy superior image editing by getting to grips with raw files

Creative printing
Discover the best papers to do your printouts justice

Retouching tools
Use the Clone and Patch tools to soften wrinkles and laughter lines

Holiday montage
Generate a digital photo board to present your best holiday snaps

44 pages of creative tutorials inside

Create beautiful **chalk images**

Get inspired by family photos and turn them into stunning art – see p26

Free CD-ROM!

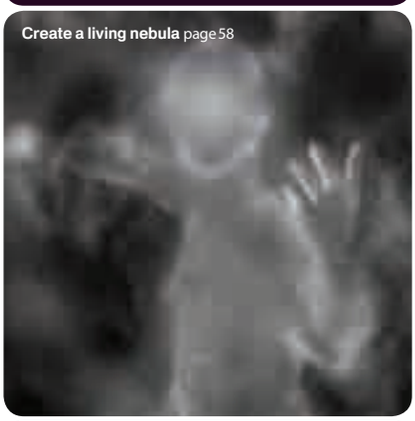
- 40+ Type and icon fonts
- 20+ Texture brush sets
- NightScope plug-in
- 40+ Stock photos

and much more

eMag

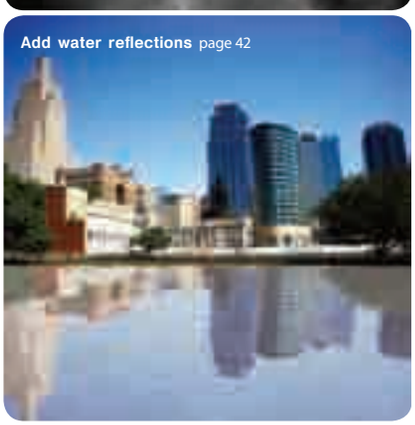
Welcome

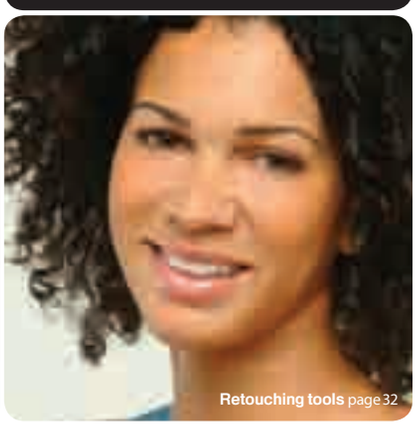
A glimpse of what's in store this issue…



Mission Statement

Here at *Photoshop Creative*, we promise to always give you the best selection of resources to help improve your Photoshop skills. Whether it's in-depth guides to tools and techniques, or showing how to create a work of digital art, we'll make sure the information you get is accurate and informative. We want you to get the optimum Photoshop experience, and have as much fun using the program as we do putting the magazine together.





A family gathering is always a great excuse to take hundreds of photographs. But once you have all those photos, why not go that extra mile with the best ones and turn them into art? By emulating the appearance of pastel and chalk, you can get beautiful results surprisingly easily. We did exactly this with our cover, and you can find out just how we did it on page 26.

Those who are in the mood for some photo trickery will certainly enjoy a couple of our tutorials this issue. First up is our look at creating reflections, starting on page 42. This can transform a humdrum cityscape into something far more interesting. We also show how to turn a photograph of a man into a spectacular nebula creature – guaranteed to tickle the fancy of any sci-fi fan. Discover how it's done by turning to page 58.

But there's also plenty of other content for those who want to edit photos or get to grips with Photoshop's tools, such as a great guide to softening wrinkles and laughter lines and a fabulous project that involves creating cork boards, drawing pins and sticky tape. In short, there's lots for however you use Photoshop, so enough with the chat – go and get creating!

Until next time…

Jo Cole **Editor**
jo.cole@imagine-publishing.co.uk

contents

Complete list
What's in this issue…

06 Contributors
Meet the clever people who share their wisdom with us

08 Creative forum
Your chance to share thoughts and opinions with other readers

10 Creative hub
The latest roundup of news and services for creative sorts

13 Interview: Jon Oringer
We talk to Shutterstock's Jon Oringer about the stock business

14 Reader's profile
Discover what a fellow reader gets up to in Photoshop

16 Feature: Creative printing
The most creative paper options for inkjet printers

25 Tutorial intro
All the learning lined up this issue

74 Advice centre
Common Photoshop problems foiled and avoided

80 Next month
Get a taste of what content we have in store for you next issue

81 Creative reviews
The best third-party products to extend your version of Photoshop

88 On the CD
Discover what content we've crammed in on this issue's free CD

90 Subscribe
Subscribe to *Photoshop Creative* today and save up to 40%

94 Exhibit
Entered a Readers' Challenge? See if your work is in print

98 Readers' challenge
A fresh batch of photos for you to get creative with

16 You have lots of choice when it comes to printing mediums – here are the best

Creative printing

Creative hub
The latest creative news

Find out more about the best new services and products of interest to Photoshop users

Advice centre
Your questions answered

Don't suffer in silence if you have a Photoshop problem. Write in to our Advice centre for the solution

Creative reviews
Spend some money…

The best third-party products to extend your Photoshop creativity, whatever your budget is

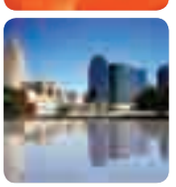
On the CD
More free resources

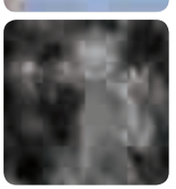
From photos to brushes, to fonts to textures, there's a great collection of resources for you on the disc

Exhibit
Reader showcase

This is the part where we present the best entries to previous Readers' Challenges. Is yours here?

tutorials





Creative tutorials
Make great art today

26 Create chalk images
Use layer masks and brushes to get the effect of a chalk drawing

32 Retouching tools
Soften wrinkles with the Clone, Patch and Healing Brush tools

38 Generate a wood texture
Create realistic wood textures using filters and the Liquify tool

42 Create a water reflection
Add drama to your photos by introducing water and reflections

50 Paint like Georgia O'Keefe
A great way to do something wonderful with your flower photos

56 Improve your exposure
A clever trick for using multiple photos for perfect exposure

58 Make a living nebula
Have fun creating a spooky creature in outer space

66 Design a photo board
Display your holiday snaps on a digital photo board, complete with pins!

72 Cool plug-ins: NightScope
Emulate the look of night vision goggles with this great plug-in

Technical tutorials
Understand your software

36 Focus on: Color Range
Make quick and accurate selections with the Color Range command

46 Big Technique: Work with Raw files
Enjoy superior image editing by using the Camera Raw plug-in

64 Focus on: Align and Distribution
Make sure your work always lines up thanks to these wonderful tools

Creative Forum

Send us your thoughts on the magazine or the Photoshop world in general, and see if other readers agree with you

Join the dotted line

Hi, I'm writing because the problem posed by Rebecca Kitchener ('Ancient Parchment' on page 76 of issue 12) is one that I have had to solve myself and I would like to suggest a refinement of the solution.

The solution given does indeed give nice evenly spaced squares, but the direction they face does not follow the shape of the line. I achieve this effect by creating a simple rectangular custom brush, and in the Brush Shape Dynamics setting the Angle Jitter to 0% with the control set to Direction (I set the spacing as described in your answer). I then create a path in the shape I want and use the brush to stroke the path. This gives a beautifully even dotted line.

If you want a more even effect to your dotted lines, follow Jo-Maree's advice for perfect spacing

I should take this opportunity to thank *Photoshop Creative,* as without you I would never have come up with this solution. I use Photoshop for work primarily to annotate scientific images. This often means highlighting the shape of a cellular structure by overlaying a dotted line on the image. Your tutorial on Photo Montages in issue seven inspired me to play around with the brush settings and I realised how to achieve the effect I was looking for.

Thanks again and best wishes.

Dr Jo-Maree Courtney

Thanks for your email, Jo-Maree – we're sure other readers will find it useful!

Flower power

You may remember I sent you the black-and-white sketches you featured in the forum a couple of months ago.

This time I took an unpromising snapshot, cropped it and then spent a few hours exploring all the artistic tools. With this image I let nature supply the 'creative aspect' and I just used Photoshop to bring out the design hidden within.

Mike has let his imagination run riot and turned this poppy photo into something quite different!

Although this particular art piece was only a small cropped section of the original photo, it can be enlarged without too much loss of definition to create a design for printing and framing.

Adobe Photoshop just keeps coming up with more and more gems the more I use it!

Mike Mitchell

It's great to see your work, Mike. Keep on creating and keep showing us what you do!

View from the forum

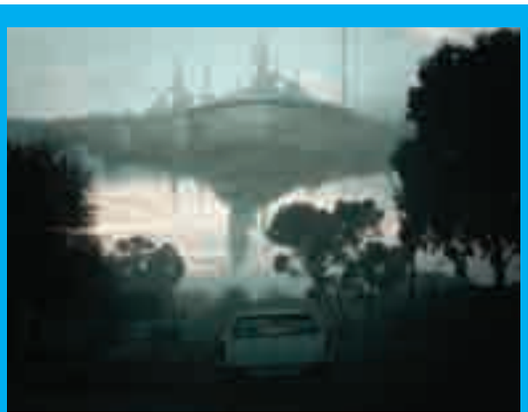
User: Jo
Post: Elements chat room
Make sure you check out the new Elements chat room in the *Photoshop Creative* forum. This is a place for Elements users to come and share tips and also find out how to do our tutorials if Elements doesn't have a certain tool. Hope you like it!

User: trixietrancer
Post: Free!
I've just put loads of free images up for grabs on Stock Xchange. Make sure you go and check them out.

Forum challenge

Forum challenge winners

The last two forum challenges couldn't have been more different if we had tried! Challenge number four was titled 'Independence Day' (yes, it was posted on 4 July!). A lot of you took the film as a source of inspiration, and vshen took the winner's title with an excellent image. Challenge number five was based around the word 'fairytale', and generated lots of lovely weird creatures and beasties. We picked Dannei's digital collage as the winner. Be sure to check the forum for the latest challenge and see your image here!



Far left: vshen got up at 6.00am to take the source photo before sketching and painting the space ship in Photoshop. Brilliant!

Left: Dannei's interpretation of 'fairytale' is an excellent example of a digital collage, and the text treatment helps give an almost disturbing feeling to the piece

TALK TO US! | EMAIL US YOUR THOUGHTS TO PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

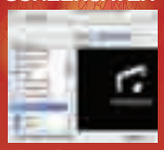
eMag

Creative hub

The latest news stories for the Photoshop community

What's hot this month

ISTOCKPHOTO SCREENSAVER



The iStockphoto Screensaver displays past Free Images of the Week, plus the latest front-page blog posts. PC and Mac. Download **www.istockphoto.com/downloads**

PHOTOS TO TINY PIXELS

Craig Robinson of Flip Flop Flying shows how to create pixel-based portraits in this Photoshop tutorial. **www.flipflopflyin.com/g/2006/06/how-to-do-pixel-head.html**

REAL WORLD IMAGE SHARPENING

Real World Image Sharpening with Adobe Photoshop CS2 gets to grips with the often complex question of when and how to sharpen those images. 304 pages from **www.peachpit.com**.

TOP STORY

COMMUNITY

Under the Abstract Influence

Creative site lets users share and display Photoshop work, download stock images and create photo blogs

As the popularity of MySpace has shown, one of the big pluses of the Internet is making new and interesting virtual friends from around the world without leaving home. Abstract Influence (**www.abstractinfluence.com**) is a community of individuals who share a passion to showcase work and inspire one another.

Showcase your work and get feedback from others

Dustin Jansick aka 'emo_boy' is one of the minds behind the site, which has over 3,000 registered users: "Abstract Influence is an online community where graphic designers share and discuss their work," he says. "Focused on but not limited to the use of Photoshop, AI aims to bring the best designers from around the world to display what ultimately 'influences us' through art."

The AI site includes a busy forum and an extensive library of stock images created by members. Users can download any of the photos free of charge for any commercial or personal design work as long as they agree terms of use set by the individual. "We have over 6,000 free stock photos you can use for Photoshop projects," says Dustin.

Because many hands make light work, the database of downloads is vast and varied. Images are listed under various categories with recent additions displayed at the bottom of the main page. A news section keeps users updated with any Photoshop and computer-related happenings.

AI also adds some excellent Photoshop battles, a selection of user-created designs and offers members space to create their own blog. "Photo blogging is becoming more popular every day. Thanks to the digicam, it's easier now to take pictures of your day rather than write about it."

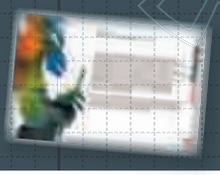
The AI team plans to expand the site, adding more free resources, photo blogs, Photoshop battles and tutorials designed to enthuse: "AI is filled with creative graphic designers who use Photoshop professionally," says Dustin. "They give suggestions regarding your work, and of course tutorials to improve your skills. Although focused on graphic design, AI also recognises photography and any other form of art. Photoshop is the glue that brings it all together."

TALK TO US! | SEND NEWS STORIES TO ZOE.MUTTER@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

In the beginning, part 12

Follow the evolution of Photoshop in this regular series

Photoshop 8 ('Dark Matter'), arrived in October 2003 under the new CS moniker designed to unite Adobe's most popular apps. The makeover added many enhancements, including the Color Replacement tool, Layer Comps, Photomerge and integrated Camera Raw support. A Crop & Straighten tool took the pain out of scanning, while the Shadow/Highlight correction tool brought out image detail. A better browser added clarity, and a Histogram palette gave access to tonal range and exposure. On the downside, a sluggish CS hogged memory, and a counterfeit deterrence system (CDS) prevented users from scanning bank notes.



Stockcache blog offers images for all

Online blog adds wealth of free stock images to the usual news and views mix

Stockcache (http://stockcache.com/blog) is both blog and resource for anyone wanting images for Photoshop projects. Run by Daniel Weber, the blog includes a Stock Gallery featuring hundreds of images.

"The site was created mainly because of an interest in photography and creating websites," says Daniel. "I also wanted to provide a resource of images that others would be able to use freely."

You'll find Stockcache a useful image resource

Users can browse and search images, rate files and download favourites as full-sized zip files. Photos are listed under various categories, and an Image Dump acts as a temporary holding area for unsorted images.

Best of all, everything is free to use, as Daniel is points out: "Stockcache helps Photoshop users by providing them with a fairly large collection of free images for use in their projects. The images are also licensed under a Creative Commons Licence (**http://stockcache.com/gallery/terms.php**), which allows unrestricted use of the images for personal and commercial usage." It's a trend that seems to be proving popular, with several enthusiast sites offering collections for free.

IMAGE EDITING

Adobe Lightroom Beta goes Windows

New beta download gives PC and Mac users a chance to help develop Adobe's digital photography app

Adobe has released Lightroom Beta for Windows after a Mac-only version was introduced in January. Intended as a digital imaging workflow and editing solution for photographers, Lightroom offers the ability to import, select, develop and showcase large volumes of digital images. Designed to work in harmony with Photoshop, Adobe's John Nack revealed on his company blog that 70,000 Windows users signed up in advance to receive notification of the launch.

Although primarily aimed at pros and serious enthusiasts, there's enough potential to appeal to just about anyone. With Lightroom, photographers can rapidly scroll through hundreds of images and use Quick One-to-One Zoom to instantly magnify the finer points in the image. More at **http://labs.adobe.com/technologies/lightroom**.

Layout and tool options differ a little from the Mac version

EXPOSURE

Get your work seen

WALLSPANKERS
www.wallspankers.com

Fun collaborative endeavour that relies on participants' submissions and 'spanks', creating stickers to place just about anywhere. Quarterly zines, both online and in print formatted for 'Crack & Peel' labels, are designed to be copied and printed. A great mix of big names and newbies means a chance to get seen.

RENDEROSITY
www.renderosity.com

Online art community since December 1998, Renderosity aims to 'create a thriving, productive environment that encourages an atmosphere of community, respect, collaboration and growth for graphic artists, digital artists, animators, photographers and writers of all backgrounds and levels'.

Updates...

THIS MONTH IN SHORT

New additions to the world of Photoshop

Wacom adds Elements 4

Wacom's added extra value to its budget tablet range by bundling Photoshop Elements 4.0 with the Graphire4 Studio and Studio XL pen tablets. The upgrade brings the Wacom bundle in line with the latest Adobe release. Graphire Studio costs £99.99, Studio XL £179.99 inc VAT. Both have a two-year warranty. **www.wacom-europe.com**

The Photoshop Anthology

Highlighting the often-neglected web tools available in Photoshop, this new book from O'Reilly offers "101 web design tips, tricks & techniques." As well as explaining how to build sites, author Corrie Haffly offers a wealth of tips across 352 full-colour pages. Around £23.95. **www.oreilly.com**

ALERT! | DON'T FORGET TO ENTER OUR READERS' CHALLENGE – SEE PAGE 98

Make a date

At a loose end? Here are the must-see events coming your way

4-5 SEP
D&DA XCHANGE LONDON
Adobe-sponsored event offers two days of talks, case studies and debate covering full range of creative disciplines by top creative minds. Aimed mainly at educators. **www.dandad.org/xchange**

21 SEP
MASTER PHOTOSHOP CS2 TOUR, ST. LOUIS, MO
Adobe Photoshop Seminar Tour continues when Deke McClelland arrives at America's Center Convention Center. **www.photoshopseminars.com**

30 SEP-1 OCT
BEN WILLMORE: MASTERING THE POWER OF SMART OBJECTS
Spend two days in Berkeley, California getting to grips with Smart Objects. Learn all about warping and manipulating a layer. **www.digitalstop.com/workshops**

FREE PHOTOS

Free to share, free to cooperate

French photographer offers 11,000-strong image resource under copyleft 'Free Art Licence'

One potential headache when sourcing images to use in your Photoshop work online is finding work free of copyright. Some sites limit use to non-commercial projects, while others restrict the modifying of the original image.

Jeremie Zimmermann is happy for users to modify his striking collection of over 11,000 photos under the copyleft 'Free Art Licence'. "They are free as in free speech," he says. "That means a lot to me. As for the free software, everyone has the right to copy it, modify it, share it and share their modified versions, as long as they keep a word about the copyleft, me and my site. People should be able to use their modified works the same way as they used mine."

The bilingual **http://tofz.org** started as a way for Jeremie to show friends what he'd been doing on his travels, including a visit to San Francisco: "Back in France I had lots of fun picturing small details of my everyday urban life and collating them in some kind of gigantic dump that is Tofz.org."

The site has stayed online by "some kind of magic" since 2000 despite four hosting changes and several crashes. Cityscapes and urban scenes dominate, but there are also excellent abstract images suitable for textures. Photos are divided into cities and countries including Paris and Amsterdam, as well as categories such as buildings, skylines, urban art and experimental. "I love to promote sharing and cooperation in a world of fighting and competition. Art always come from inspiration."

Just two of 11,000 imaginative images

Two of the best… SITES FOR FONTS

RobotJohnny.com
www.robotjohnny.com/fonts

Cool, free for non-commercial use fonts for PC and Mac, some date back to 1996 when John Martz aka Robot Johnny was at school. With names like Monkey Chunks and Bottled Fart, they'd suit anyone creating a comic book style. All are 'toyware', which means for commercial use payment must be in the form of a toy.

Shamrocking.com
www.shamrocking.com/fonts.html

Small selection of wacky fonts inspired by comic books and Fifties rock 'n roll. Some date way back, but all are worth a look. As is Shamrocking's Flash-based main site, showcasing some great fonts, logos and illustrations. We particularly love the fonts inspired by Elvis Presley record sleeves. Rock on!

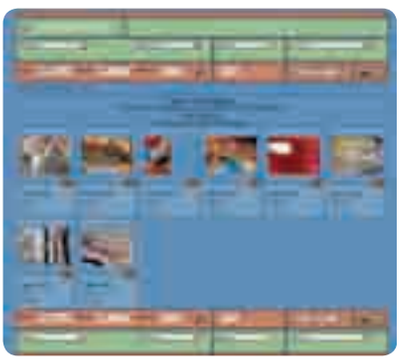
ONLINE RESOURCES

The raw ingredients

Enthusiast site provides raw materials for creating interesting and unique Photoshop textures

While many enthusiast-run sites mimic resources offered by pay-sites with high res stock images, Image*After (**www.imageafter.com**) relishes the raw and unsophisticated. Run under the slogan 'unpolished images and textures – the raw base for your creativity', the three-man team of Tristan, Lex and Stefan provides an alternative: "We offer 'raw' material that anyone can use as they see fit," says Lex.

These include many abstract images and surfaces such as close-ups of canvases and paint to use as Photoshop textures, and even brushes. Creating your own library of textures and brushes takes time of course, but Image*After offers many sources of inspiration to get you started.



Get inspired and then create something truly unique

Everything on the site is free. "We've always liked the fact that so many people on the web offer their work and ideas freely, and wanted to give something back," says Lex.

The team's wish list

Pure material delight…

SAGEM PHOTO EASY 110, PHOTO EASY 110 WI-FI

With these new printers from Sagem you can connect wirelessly to your camera, memory card, mobile and computer via wi-fi, IrDA and Bluetooth. Dye-sublimation technology means images are dry to touch, and red eye and imperfections can be reduced without a computer.

WE WANT IT BECAUSE…

Sagem promises photo-lab quality, highly durable, water and fingerprint-proof prints. Petite and light with a cool Clamshell design – ideal if you are on the move or stuck for space. USB 2.0 PC and Mac-compatible, priced around £70 (£90 with wi-fi). **www.sagem.com**

All images courtesy of Shutterstock

THE STORY BEHIND...

Shutterstock

If you need quality royalty-free stock photographs then look no further than the immense collection at Shutterstock. We talked to Jon Oringer, CEO of Shutterstock, about the site's incredible success...

What makes Shutterstock stand out from the crowd?

01 Quality of our images. We adhere to very strict standards when evaluating submissions.

02 Diversity of our photo collection. We strive for variety within our library.

03 User-friendly interface. Shutterstock is easy to search and photos are easy to download.

04 Subscription model. Simple and straightforward.

05 Affordability. Shutterstock provides a great photo resource at a very accessible price.

Shutterstock is the perfect site for designers who need convenient and regular access to great-looking images. It's one of the fastest growing suppliers of royalty-free stock images in the stock photography industry, with over 850,000 images in its library. Recently it also started offering footage, expanding its number of users further. You can even add your own photos and earn money yourself, joining the 30,000 photographers uploading images already. The site is the world's largest subscription agency and is continuing to expand, with around 11,000 images added every week. In the last year alone it has increased its already impressive collection of high-quality and diverse images by 70 per cent. So if you need varied stock photos of quality, you're likely to find them at Shutterstock...

How did Shutterstock begin?

It emerged out of my interest in photography and experience as an Internet entrepreneur. The more I learned about the photo industry, the more I saw a need for quality images at affordable prices. It got me excited to start my own company, and Shutterstock was the result.

The site has recently introduced Shutterstock Footage. Can you tell us a bit more about this and what formats are available to download?

We're very excited about Shutterstock Footage. We're the first to launch video capabilities, and we're hoping it'll become as trusted a resource as the stock photo site. We have footage available for download in the following formats: QuickTime, WMV, MPG, DV, HDDV, AVI.

How do people submit photos and footage to Shutterstock and how do they receive payment?

Our contributing photographers are an amazingly diverse group, spread around the world. They range from photography pros to talented amateurs. All their work has to meet our strict standards for quality before the screening team will approve it for posting. Our photographers are paid each time one of their photos is downloaded by a customer.

How do you buy images at Shutterstock and how much are they?

Shutterstock works by subscription. Subscribers can download 25 images every day – that's 750 every month – to be used royalty-free, forever. Our subscriptions start at one month for $159. If you sign up for three months, six months, or one year, discounts apply.

In June the site announced the addition of the 850,000th image to your library, making it a very impressive collection. What would you say are the most popular areas in the library and who do you feel is your main type of user?

The most popular categories are Business and People. Our customers return to those categories again and again. With 13,000 new images added each week, they find something new each time. We also have 30 categories of images, including Animals/Wildlife, Beauty/Fashion, Buildings/Architecture, Sports/Recreation, Signs/Symbols and more. We cater for creative professionals in publishing, advertising, web design, product design and more. We see our imagery in postcards and billboards, packaging and textbooks. Shutterstock has images for everybody and for every use.

What other forms of image can you sell and download on Shutterstock?

Shutterstock has photographs, illustrations and vectors available for download.

In what ways has the site been updated and tailored to suit users' needs?

It's vital to be responsive to users' needs and we've made many adjustments based on their feedback. For example, we'll supply a CD to customers on a monthly basis with all the images they've downloaded. We also introduced an Enhanced Licence in response to users who wanted to use our photos in ways the Standard Licence didn't allow.

Future plans for Shutterstock?

We'll continue to grow our collection and improve our service. We're currently the largest subscription stock photo agency in the world, and we look forward to continuing to expand our image library.

One of Shutterstocks's future customers takes a break...

WEB | SEE WHAT IMAGES YOU CAN ENJOY AT **WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK.COM**

Reader's profile

Creating strange and beautiful worlds is Ida's forte, and it all hinges around stock photos. We caught up with her to find out more…

Ida Mary Walker Larsen

Anyone who's a regular at the deviantART site might recognise Ida's work. Her other-worldly creations rely on a healthy bank of stock photos so she can turn the mundane into the fantastical. We caught up with Ida to find out how she uses Photoshop and stock imagery.

How did you get started with Photoshop?
I started experimenting about three years ago when I joined the online art community deviantART. At first it was mostly digital drawings and colouring, but soon I started photo-manipulation – the latter being what I still spend the most time on.

What tool or technique do you use most?
A combination of the Dodge and Burn tools, Contrast, Levels and Opacity.

What's your personal favourite piece?
A tough question. I have many faves, as they reflect my mood at that particular time. But at the moment I think it would be 'The Dragon Wars', 'The Settlement' and 'First Light'.

What inspires you?
Everything! Movies, philosophy, books, mythology, religion and most of all, fantasy.

What are your stock images and your exclusive donator stock packs?
Stock images are vital. Even digital painters use them for reference. Most of my nature stock and resources are my own photos – I've a whole photo library on my computer, and a stock gallery on DA, helping other photo-manipulators with poses, fantasy themes, etc. I started my own account because I wanted to return some of the kindness shown me by the stock'ers. Inspired by a wonderful friend and fellow artist/stocker, Lucias, I opened up for donations not long ago. This way people can help me fund my stock account. Costumes etc are expensive and I like to keep a good variety, so I came up with the idea of returning my donators' kindness by offering them stock packs exclusive to their use.

What's your best Photoshop tip?
Layers – as many as needed! And making sure their lighting matches to make them blend.

What do you enjoy most about Photoshop?
The fact that *anything* is possible. You can use it for almost everything – by far the most diverse program I know.

What are your future plans?
I hope to make a living as a digital artist from commissioned and freelance work. I just signed with art agency 'Angelles Art International' in March, so that's a great start.

See Ida's work at **www.mizzdraconia.deviantart.com**. You can also buy prints of her creations from **http://stores.ebay.com/Sweet-Georgia-Browns-Books_ANGELLES-ART-GALLERY**

Make yourself known!

If you would like to be featured in these pages, send us an email to **pcr@imagine-publishing.co.uk** with a few lines about who you are and what sort of Photoshop work you do.

DECONSTRUCTING AN IMAGE

Discover how Ida created The Settlement

One of Ida's favourite pieces, 'The Settlement' was inspired by the story of the little mermaid. Find out how she achieved such dramatic effects

01 Cut and place I cut out the figure with the Polygon Lasso tool and added the mermaid tail and wing fins. Highlighted areas on all the layers with the Dodge tool and added shadow with the Burn tool. All to make it look like a 'real' figure! I normally use a large size canvas (3600 x 2700/2400) to make it printable.

02 Playing with perspective I added the rendered fish, the light coming out of her mouth, and added a blue layer behind the woman and the back fish that I lowered to 50% Opacity. This made the fish in the background look like it was further back in the image (taking depth in the image into consideration).

NOTES | DON'T BE SHY, GET IN TOUCH AND REVEAL A BIT ABOUT YOUR WORKING PRACTICES TO OTHER READERS

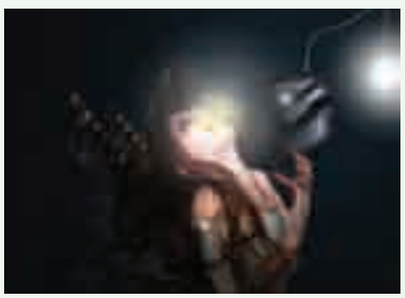
A Mermaid's Tale
Well I have always been in love with mermaids, and as I had just made new mermaid stock I wanted to do a mermaid piece with some of the wonderful textures available at DA. I went for the more surreal mood.
– A Mermaid's Tale –

Intensity (right)

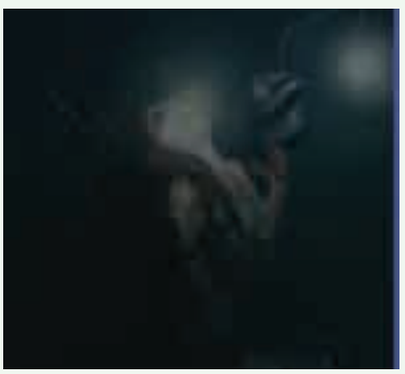
The first in an animal series – this being the 'butterfly'. I wanted to portray a creature part animal, part human. I spent a lot of time on the textures here too.

Memoirs (below)

I made this as a gift for Elisabeth (the model). I wanted to portray that sweet melancholic feeling you get when looking back at your past.



03 **Bringing things together** I then added more light/shadows on the fish, some seaweed on the ground in front and behind her, more shadows on her and her hair with the Burn tool. I used the Eraser tool lowered to 10 to make the tips of her hair look more flowing and see-through, as in water.



04 **Hit the floor** Finally, I added the sea floor below her, plus more blue layers in the front and between the objects – also lowered to 30-50% Opacity.

05 **In a frame** Now I merged all the layers and hit Auto Levels. Then I went to the Edit menu and chose the Fade option, fading and changing it to the effect I wanted to achieve. Finishing touches were the framing and titling of the piece.

Essential advice for getting more from your printer

Creative printing

Your creative options don't stop once an image is complete – there's a whole range of print mediums for displaying your work…

By the time an artist sits down in front of their easel and starts painting or sketching, they would already have spent a bit of time considering what type of paper to use. And this wouldn't have been a random choice – they will choose paper according to the medium they are using and what type of look they're aiming for. By picking the correct texture and weight of paper, they know that their painting will look the best it possibly can.

For most Photoshop users, though, the thought and concentration goes into creating an image – printing is often an afterthought, and deciding what paper to print to is even further down the list of concerns. This isn't surprising, though, when you consider what's on offer in the shops. Most stationery retailers will stock glossy or matte photo paper, maybe some T-shirt transfer paper, and if you're really lucky, something truly exotic such as sticky labels.

But once you take a leap online, a whole world of exciting options makes itself known to you. There are loads of printing mediums that have been specially made for inkjet printers, which means you can get creative using your home printer. Whether it's canvas paper for your digital paintings or novelty products such as oven-shrinking paper, we guarantee that there is an option that will pique your interest. And for the really special images, you get to pick from a host of professional companies which offer even more options.

Our task for this feature is to point you in the direction of these hallowed products that can help you make the perfect printing decision. We'll start with giving you an idea of what kind of stuff you can buy (as well as where you can buy it) and show how we used some of our favourite products.

While researching this feature we were often amazed at what was available, and really hope you get as excited by the possibilities as we did…

*The Art Surgery (**www.theartsurgery.co.uk**) is a haven for canvas prints to liven up your living space*

Surely paper is just paper?

When you first got your printer, chances are you bought a nice big stack of bright white paper. Although this is fine for printing letters or emails, to do your images justice you need to pick quality paper. If you've spent time using the Art History brush to turn a photo into a digital watercolour, it's criminal to then print it onto a flimsy bit of paper and watch in dismay as your beautiful piece of art ends up looking dull and soggy. But invest in some decent inkjet paper, and your painting will look as though it was created by hand. The colours will pop up and demand attention, and shapes will remain nice and crisp. Plus, the fine art inkjet papers are meant to last the distance, so while your normal printout might fade and show its age, the specialist paper will go on and on.

When considering what paper to print your art onto, you need to think like an artist and delve into the world of paper weight. If you had a selection of artist paper in front of you, you'd be able to feel how it varies in terms of thickness and weight. Artist paper is measured in 'gsm', and the higher the number, the thicker and heavier the paper. You might also come across terms such as 'rough' and 'smooth'. This is pretty obvious as to meaning, but if you're going for a watercolour effect the rough paper will give the impression of 'true' watercolour.

One company that is established in the world of fine art paper is Hahnemuhle. It's been producing art paper for more than 420 years and has now entered the inkjet arena. Its Aquarello product offers users a textured surface that works well with the watercolour effect and can be yours for £9.99 for 12 A4 sheets. If you prefer a pastel or chalk effect, its Pastel paper will delight. The fine silky finish brings out all the colours and brush strokes of your piece and also costs £9.99 for 12 sheets. Both products

> "Invest in some decent inkjet paper, and your painting will look as though it was created by hand"

can be bought from Lawrence Art Materials (**www.lawrence.co.uk**).

If you have an A3 printer, you can buy five sheets of watercolour paper from Crafty Computer Paper (**www.craftycomputerpaper.co.uk**). It will set you back £12.99, but is a great option for larger images. We'll be returning to this company a few times in the feature because it really is a treasure trove when it comes to inkjet papers.

Another company that offers plenty of fine art options for large images (but also caters for A4 printers) is Paper & Canvas Ltd (**www.breathingcoloruk.com**). Here you will find a heady choice of papers that will make exquisite printouts. You can buy most products in A4 sheets or other sizes, and you can also buy rolls. Although there's plenty for the home user here, the company makes it clear the papers have only been tested on certain printers and it can therefore only vouch for these models. But don't be put off – we tried some of its paper on a non-classified printer and got great results.

So what's on offer? We liked the Elegance Velvet paper for printing digital paintings. It's a bright white, so made the colours really sing and the fact it is instant drying meant there was no annoying time spent blowing on the final product. It costs £20.38 for 25 A4 sheets, although at the time of writing the price had been reduced to £15.08. Another excellent paper is the Sterling Rag 210g Smooth. This matte paper is smooth as silk and is excellent for photos as well as art. The texture is extremely hard wearing and won't trouble you with scuffing or flaking. A pack of 50 A4 sheets can be yours for £21.30.

Canvas for votes

The other great option for digital artists is printing to canvas. This has a wonderful texture and adds the perfect finishing touch to your digital paintings. Various companies offer packs of artist inkjet canvas, but we'll tell you about our favourites.

We've already had a little look at the paper side of its name – now it's time for the canvas. Paper & Canvas Ltd offers you two canvas choices. The

Above: Specialist inkjet papers mean home users have a great choice of weights and finishes

Above: Shrinking paper is perfect for kids, allowing them to make items such as badges and key fobs

*Paper & Canvas Ltd (**www.breathingcolor.uk.com**) has some excellent papers*

*Lawrence Art Materials (**www.lawrence.co.uk**) is great for fine art papers*

first is Brilliance Chromata White (£24.10 for 25 8.5 x 11-inch sheets). This is a bright white cotton blend canvas that has been treated so it displays the colours as they should be. It has a water-resistant surface and has been developed to not crack if you decide to stretch it. While this product is good for digital art, the Brilliance II Smooth canvas will also enhance your photos. The smooth surface won't affect the detail in photos, but it will add a bit of a kick to the final printout. It costs £30.64 for a pack of 25 8.5 x 11-inch sheets.

> "The Crafty Computer Paper company is like a gathering place for all sorts of inkjet paper"

Crafty Computer Paper also has its hand in the canvas paper market, with its 100 per cent cotton product. As with the canvas offered by Paper & Canvas Ltd, it's a beautifully textured surface on which to work and also offers impressive durability. It's really soft as well, making it easy to stretch over a frame. A pack of three A4 sheets will set you back £5.99, while three A3 sheets can be yours for £12.99.

Now it gets interesting…

As mentioned earlier, the Crafty Computer Paper company is like a gathering place for all sorts of inkjet paper. The home page has 25 sections and each of these branch off into multiple products. There are lots of photos throughout so you can see what effect the papers give and the kind of things they can be used on, plus there's an excellent Be Inspired section with ideas for projects and step-by-step instructions for using certain papers. You really need to visit the site and take in all it offers, but here are some of our favourite products.

The cotton fabric sheets are great for any fabric-based project. The cotton is on

Printing for …

Kids

Keep them happy and out of mischief with these great printing ideas…

There are lots of papers that mean kids of all ages can have lots of fun with printing. You can come up with some great rainy day projects and let the kids get on with creating something in Photoshop and then printing it for a specific use. Crafty Computer Paper is a haven for ideas, and you will no doubt return to it time and time again. In this example here, we're using the Shrink Inkjet paper.

The concept is simple – print your image onto the paper and cut out your design (1). Pop this in the oven for a couple of minutes and then leave to cool. The paper will have shrunk to about half the original size and the colours will be darker. Once it's cooled, you can apply it to whatever use you can think of! We attached a safety pin to the back (2) to make a badge. Because the paper shrinks and hardens, it is very sturdy and durable (3). This paper is also excellent for making key fobs, jewellery or decorations. It's easy to use and soon becomes very addictive!

Shrinking paper, before and after. Note the colour darkens

You can buy white or frosted paper from Crafty Computer Paper, and each sheet costs £1.40. But if the idea of shrink paper doesn't grab you, here are five other top printing ideas for children.

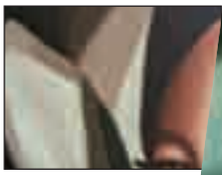
- Window cling paper is a product that allows you to decorate windows. These are great for holiday decorations or just for brightening up a bedroom. A pack of five A4 sheets will cost you £7.50 from **www.craftcomputerpaper.co.uk**.
- Waterslide decal paper is just the thing for personalising toys. It works really well on plastic toys – for instance, you may want to personalise your child's toy truck. Use this paper to make them a special logo, and then transfer it across. Eight A4 sheets costs £12 from **www.on-linepaper.co.uk**.
- Tattoo decal paper is great for kids and will keep them happy for ages.

a paper backing so it glides through your printer, but once this backing is removed you have a flexible cotton print that can be sewn onto quilts, cushions, T-shirts, bedding – pretty much anything you want. One A4 sheet costs £1.60 and you can also buy linen and silk sheets that work on the same principle. These are more expensive – both are £2.10 for an A4 sheet. The adhesive cotton sheets (£2.05 per A4 sheet) are also excellent. This time it is cotton with an adhesive backing. Print onto it and stick the image onto cards, notebooks or photo albums for a really nice finish.

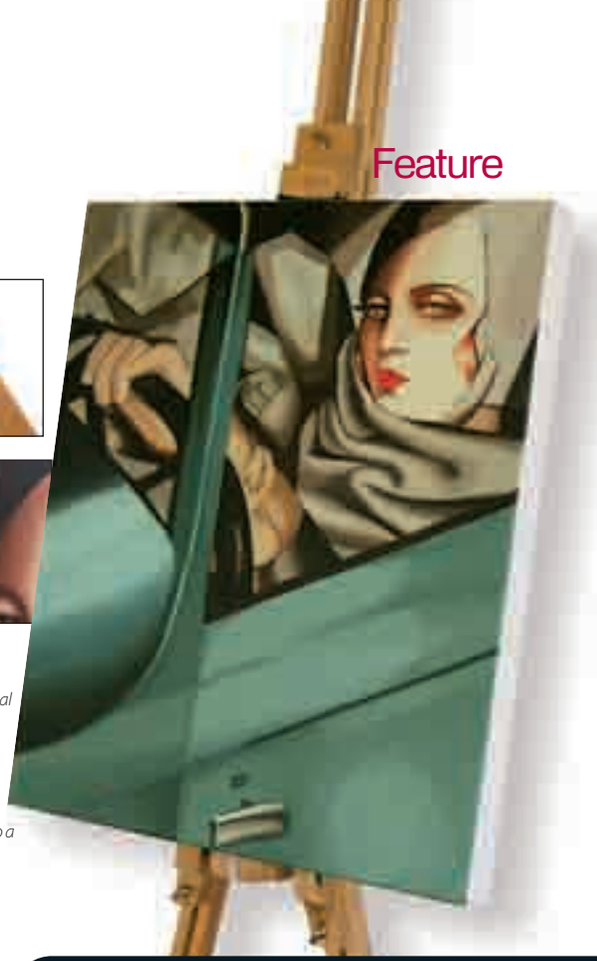
Another great product on the website is the decal papers. This is basically a type of transfer paper that you can apply to pretty much any surface you can think of. On the site you can see examples of designs being added to toys, ceramics, candles, soaps and wood. The water-slide decal involves a bit of preparation but you can also buy some dry rub off decal paper, which requires you to, erm, rub off your printed design onto your chosen surface. The dry rub paper costs £2.60 for an A4 sheet, while the water-slide decal costs £1.55.

And if you thought they were good, wait until you see the fuzzy and sticky fluffy papers. These are extremely tactile and hold ink surprisingly well considering the surface is, well, fuzzy! A set of five US letter-sized fuzzy sheets will cost £4.99, while five sheets of US letter sticky fluffy paper will cost £7.99.

One thing we really like about the Crafty Computer Paper site is that it also offers plenty of products to put your printouts onto. For example, you can buy T-shirts, baby bibs, canvas bags, tea towels, or wooden boxes and wooden shapes. You can also purchase products to hold your photos, such as snow globes, key fobs, mugs and clocks.



Above: The finish and texture on PhotoArtistry canvas prints is exceptional

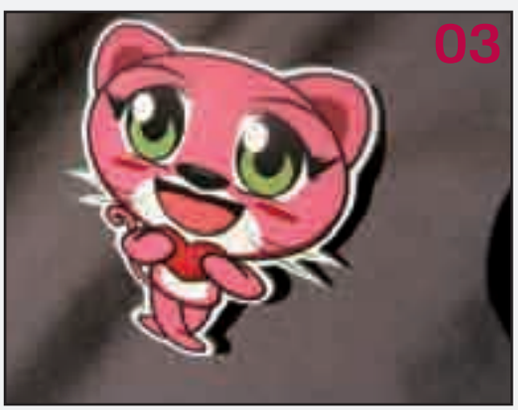


Right: Turn your prized Photoshop creations into a stunning canvas, thanks to PhotoArtistry

If you know a budding Captain Jack Sparrow, use this to print out a skull and crossbones tattoo! An A4 sheet costs £2.60 from Crafty Computer Paper.

Cotton fabric sheets are great for personalising bedding, clothing or curtains. Simply print and sew to any surface. An A4 sheet costs £1.60 from Crafty Computer Paper.

The creative sticker sheets from Photo Paper Direct let you make your own stickers. A pack of 20 A4 sheets costs £9.39 from **http://photopaperdirect.com**.



PHOTOARTISTRY

www.photoartistry.co.uk

The company was set up by Anne Herbert, a fine artist who wanted a way of reproducing her paintings on a textured surface. After visiting a trade show in 1998, she saw a large format printer that printed to canvas, and bought the printer, along with a computer and scanner. The company has sent out over 10,000 canvas prints since 2002! The canvas prints were originally just rolled up in a tube and posted, but so many people asked about stretching them, that Anne put her art school training to use and included the service. Although consumers obviously get a lot from the site, Anne's kept a great artist community, especially in the Se*gue*Art area. This is a gallery of customers' images, which are displayed free of charge. However, the artist can earn a royalty if the image is used for a project.

The SilverBrush Aluminium mount from PhotoArtistry is a brilliant way of presenting black-and-white images. It has a wonderful texture

You can even buy printable paper bags and gift boxes to put your creations in!

The On-line Paper.co.uk company (**www.on-linepaper.co.uk**) offers lots of fine art and transfer paper for inkjet printers, but it also provides a jigsaw puzzle. Costing £10 (excluding VAT), you print your design onto the transfer paper and then transfer this onto the pre-cut base using an iron. Once cooled, you just break it apart for someone to put it back together again!

Going pro

For the really special images, you can find a decent smattering of professional companies who will take your files and turn them into beautiful prints. One company that is a favourite around the *Photoshop Creative* office is PhotoArtistry (**www.photoartistry.co.uk**). This company specialises in large format printing and will take your image and apply it to a variety of mediums. You can choose from canvas, stretched canvas, MDF, acrylic, aluminium and also more traditional choices such as high gloss or semi-gloss inkjet paper. You can send your image file via the website or on CD, and you can even take advantage of its scanning and enlarging services to get the print you want.

We featured this company back in issue three, where we showed how to order a stretched canvas print. The final product really was sublime, with lots of colour and texture. The canvas itself felt very sturdy and the frame was expertly put together with a professional finish. Prices depend on the size ordered, but as a rough guide you can expect to pay around £40 for an A3 stretched canvas. Compare this with what you'd pay in a shop for a frame or print and you can see that it's excellent value.

Fans of black-and-white photos will love the aluminium mounts. There are two choices here – ClassicAluminium and SilverBrush Aluminium. The ClassicAluminium mount consists of a rigid 3mm aluminium panel. Your image gets printed onto high grade paper and is then sealed with a metallic texture effect laminate, which gives it the aluminium feel. At the back of the mount are two wooden battens that are used to fix it to the wall.

For even more impact, the SilverBrush mount uses a similar process, except your image is first printed onto silver paper.

Printing for ...

Gifts

Take a look at these imaginative ideas for the next time you're searching for that perfect present

Now you know there are lots of creative possibilities when it comes to your image output, you can start dazzling friends and relatives with all sorts of image-led gifts. Because you can get printouts onto pretty much any surface, there are untold possibilities when it comes to personalising gifts and making them special. In our example here, we've applied a photo to a trinket box using Crafty Computer Paper's dry rub decal. You get two sheets – a transparent one for printing on and an adhesive sheet. Once you've printed the image, peel off the backing of the adhesive sheet and attach to the printed surface (1). You need to make sure that there are no air bubbles, so this process may take a while. Cut away any excess and leave for an hour. Now you have to peel off the backing and place the sticky printed surface onto your object and rub well with a coin (2). Make sure that you cover the entire area. Peel off the film backing and your image will have been transferred to your object (3).

An A4 sheet of dry rub off decal costs £2.60 and you can choose from clear or white sheets. But you have plenty of other gift options, thanks to the range of excellent inkjet papers on the market. Here's a roundup of our favourites…

We've mentioned the jigsaw puzzle paper from On-line Paper.co.uk, and although a jigsaw is a great gift in itself, you can be more imaginative. Maybe print out a special birthday message and make the recipient do the jigsaw to see the message. An A4 jigsaw can be yours for £10 from **www.on-linepaper.co.uk**.

The water-slide decal paper from Crafty Computer Paper is perfect for applying to all sorts of surfaces. Why not use it around the edge of a mirror frame, or even on a piece of furniture? A clear A4 sheet costs £1.55.

Staying with Crafty Computer Paper, you can use its magnetic paper to easily create fridge magnets for someone. Perhaps create a countdown to a special day, with space for them to cross off the days. A pack of three A4 sheets will set you back £5.80.

"For the really special images, you can find a decent smattering of professional companies who will take your files and turn them into beautiful prints"

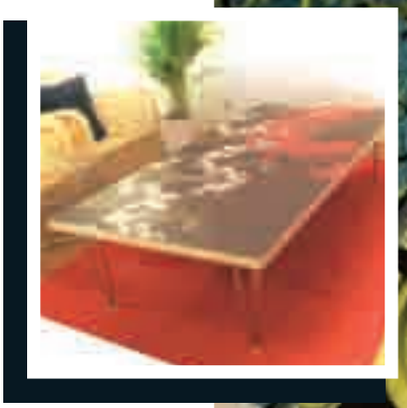
Because silver is so good at reflecting light, the final product changes according to position and lighting conditions.

Both products have a wonderful texture, with little flecks of aluminium peeking through. For an A3 Classic mount you'll pay about £60, while the SilverBrush is more expensive at £80.

For a clean and contemporary look, the AcrylicSandwich block gives a really interesting, almost 3D effect. After being printed onto glossy inkjet paper, your image gets sandwiched between two sheets of acrylic perspex. The intense gloss and smoothness of this mount boosts colours and so is perfect for colour photos or digital art. It's more expensive than other print options (around £110) but will last a lifetime.

Going big!

Another professional company close to our hearts is The Big Print Company (**www.thebigprintcompany.com**). As its name would suggest, it allows you to get your images printed on a grand scale, whether it's stretched canvas, MDF board, or artist or photo-quality paper. The MDF option is definitely one to consider, with prices for an A3 print starting at around £43.44. You can have various edge finishes, whether it's the edge of the image being repeated, a colour edge being applied or even a frame. The images are printed onto matte paper and then covered with a matte laminate, which makes them really durable. You can pick two thicknesses of board – 12mm or 18mm – although if you go for a



Above: The Art Surgery is a one-stop resource for customised products

Right: If you're feeling extravagant, why not get your images printed to wallpaper at The Art Surgery

Plain canvas bags can easily be picked up from most shops, and you can add extra sparkle to one using the Brilliance Chromata White canvas paper from Paper & Canvas Ltd. Because the canvas is so soft, you can print your image and then sew it onto the bag! Prices start at £24.10 for 25 sheets.

Cushion covers can easily be perked up using some T-shirt transfer paper from Photo Paper Direct. All you have to do is print onto the paper, peel off the backing and then iron directly onto the cushion cover! A pack of ten A4 sheets costs £5.19, and you can get paper for light or dark fabrics.

THE BIG PRINT COMPANY

www.thebigprintcompany.com

When you want to go large, The Big Print Company is the place to go. You can have canvases made up to an amazing 140 x 95cm and also have your images printed onto wallpaper. In addition to using your own images on the products, you can also use one of the photos displayed in the site's gallery. For limited edition pieces, head over to The Art Surgery and buy canvases using artists' images. Artists are also on hand to apply effects to your photos before being printed, or even retouch images and scan them in. At the moment the site is developing a range of soft furnishings.

Here you can see the benefit of printing to special watercolour paper. The image on the right was printed onto 'normal' inkjet paper and suffers from dull colours and texture

really big image, pick the thinner board so weight doesn't become an issue.

One service that makes this company stand out is the team of artists who can apply effects to the images you send in. If, say, you had a photo of your spouse, you could send it in and get the company to apply a comic effect, make it look like a Pop Art painting or go for a graphic style. You can even get them to fix your old or damaged photos, ready to be printed.

If you want your art or photos to really become part of a room, a wallpaper print could be for you! Priced at £39 per square metre, you send the company your image and it'll be transformed onto 36-inch strips ready to be hung. If you haven't got an image to hand, there are loads of scenes on the site that you can use. In fact, you can use these for any of the print mediums.

In addition to the services at The Big Print Company site, if you go to The Art Surgery (**www.theartsurgery.co.uk**) you can get a couple more options. This site is part of The Big Print Company, except it concentrates more on using existing images in artistic ways. But there is still a gem to be found. We were really impressed with the lightboxes. These can be used on a wall or as a coffee table, and you can use your own images. Each lightbox is custom made according to your size specifications, and you can pick from a real wood veneer or metallic finish.

Things to consider

Before you set off on your great printing odyssey, there are some things you need to consider. The main area of concern is whether your printer has any limitations. Some of the fine art paper is very thick, so if your printer feeds paper in a curved fashion, you're more than likely to come a cropper. Most printer manuals will have guidelines on the maximum paper thickness you can use. If you go over

Printing for ...

Artists

Give your work the edge with this exciting and different choice of display options...

For digital artists, the ability to print onto paper that has quality and texture is a very happy event indeed. And with the canvas sheets, there's no reason why you can't create your own stretched canvases using your artwork. We've used the Brilliance Chromata White product from Paper & Canvas Ltd here.

The first job is to construct (or buy) a very simple frame from wood (1). The thickness and width of the wood will determine how large you can print your image. Because the canvas will be stretched around the frame, you need to allow for a plain border around your image that will fit on the space you have on the canvas (2). Of course, you can print the image larger so it wraps around the frame, giving a seamless effect. Most inkjet canvases will have a coated side that you print on to. This protects the ink and stops it smudging, so make sure you get the right side (3). Once your image is printed, you can protect it even further by applying a special veneer. We used the Glamour II product from Paper & Canvas Ltd, and simply applied it to the surface with a roller (4). Once dry, staple one edge of the canvas over the frame, and then work your way around the other edges, making sure you pull as tight as you can (5). And that's your artwork created!

In addition to the different printing mediums, there are various display options for digital artists. Here are some ideas of what you can get up to...

- Watercolour paintings are very effective, and you can get the same impact by printing your digital watercolours to textured inkjet paper. You can get a pack of five A4 sheets from Crafty Computer Paper for £6.50.

- Poster prints are an excellent way of doing your painstaking Photoshop brush-work justice. Head over to **http://fotoinsight.co.uk** and get your image turned into a glorious 20 x 30-inch poster for a mere £9.99.

- We've shown the aluminium mounting options from the PhotoArtistry site, but you can also print to aluminium from home. AlumaJet offers five aluminium finishes for inkjet printers. You do have to order from the US, but you can get more information from **www.horizonsisg.com/AlumaJet/alumajet_select.asp**.

- Hanging wallpaper made from your own images is a great idea for any

the recommended guidelines, you're on your own! All the companies we've mentioned state the gsm or thickness of the paper, so you can make your decision before buying.

In addition to working out if you can actually use the paper, you also need to think about preserving your image. Most fine art papers will preserve images for far longer than normal inkjet paper, but you can also buy products to ensure your printouts look fresh for years to come.

We particularly liked the Glamour II Veneer product from Paper & Canvas Ltd. This post-print coating will protect your images from moisture and light, plus it will enhance colours. You can pick from gloss or matte finishes, or mix the two together to get the precise coating you're after. Trial pints cost £12.50 each and you can also buy the RollerFoam Applicator for £6.49. It's easy to use – simply mix it with water and then roll, brush or spray over your printout. But you can also paint it on the back of a canvas paper and use it as a mounting adhesive.

Your options

If there's one thing to learn from this feature, it's that you can get imaginative with printouts – there's a rich and varied assortment of products that let you achieve all sorts of effects. In addition to the different paper textures, you can exploit the transfer papers such as decal and apply your prints to pretty much any surface you can think of. We've given you a few ideas, but there's a mountain of other possibilities just waiting for you!

Above and left: the AcrylicSandwich from PhotoArtistry gives a contemporary feel to photos

budding interior designer, but you can also use it for an oversized print. Head over to **www.theartsurgery.co.uk** for more information.

There's a great product on the market called Archival Mount Panel. This allows you to stick printouts to an MDF back using your home oven. You can buy various sizes from **www.lawrence.co.uk/shop/index.html?loadfile=catalog343_0.html**, with prices starting at just £4.25 for a 4 x 4-inch panel.

eMag

tutorials

There's lots to keep you busy this issue, whether it's creating art from family photos or getting busy with some photo trickery

Photoshop Creative_Issue 13

Big technique

Work with Camera Raw 46

Does your brain turn to mush whenever someone tries to explain the concept behind Raw files? Let us enlighten you…

Focus on...

We continue to work our way through the inbuilt tools of the Photoshop software and reveal how they can be used to create better artwork

Color Range 36
Align and Distribute 64

Cool plug-ins

NightScope plug-in 72

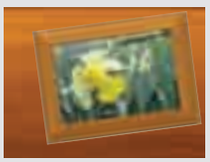
Night vision goggles give an unmistakable look and can really add impact to a photo. But if you don't want to traipse around at night taking photos, load up this plug-in and enjoy the same effect with minimum effort.

Tutorial starts on page 26

Turn your family photos into beautiful artwork using masks!

Chalk photo art

32 Remove wrinkles



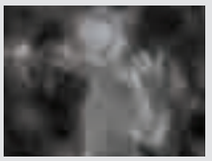
38 Make your own wood texture

42 Add reflections to photographs

66 Produce a holiday montage

50 Paint like Georgia O'Keefe

56 Merge photos for better exposure



58 Create a nebula person!

CHECK IT OUT! | TUTORIAL RESOURCE FILES CAN BE FOUND ON THE CD – SEE THE INSIDE BACK COVER

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
An hour or two

YOUR EXPERT
Tim Shelbourne

ON THE CD
starter file

Create beautiful chalk images

You don't need to be Rembrandt to create a beautiful chalk drawing. Discover how to use the power of Photoshop to create a drawing from a digital photo

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- PHOTOSHOP BRUSHES
- LAYER MASKS
- BLENDING MODES

If you've always wished that you could draw and paint, but felt let down by your lack of natural ability, then this tutorial is for you. Now, thanks to this Photoshop technique, you can create stunningly effective chalk drawings fit to grace the walls of any art gallery and you don't need a jot of artistic talent. Imagine being able to present your friends and relatives with a stunning natural media effect family portrait for Christmas, to celebrate an anniversary, or perhaps even as a wedding present! It's easy to do…

Although these Photoshop drawings look incredibly sophisticated and realistic, the technique itself is one that any Photoshop user can use, and the effect relies purely on layer masks and brushes.

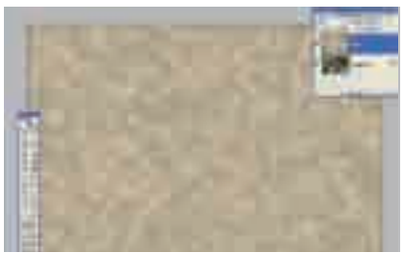
The great strength of the effect is that you need have no drawing ability whatsoever to create the image, as it's created directly from a digital photograph. Rather than actually painting on the photograph itself, we paint instead onto layer masks. This way we expose parts of numerous image layers through the brush marks applied to the masks. Throughout this project, it's vital that you make sure you're painting on the layer mask and not the image layer, so it would be a good idea to read the All About Masks boxout on page 29 before you begin.

Remember, this project is all about making marks, not real drawing. You do of course need to place your marks carefully, but nothing is permanent because you can always paint back into a layer mask with black to hide the marks you've made and try again.

So, if you've ever wanted to be an artist, here's your chance!

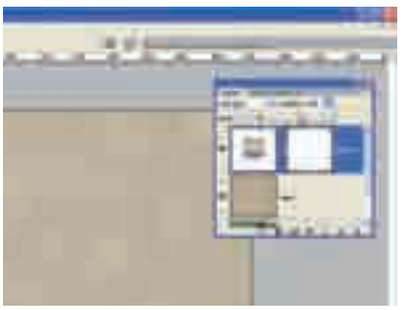
CHALK OF THE TOWN

Turning family photos into art



01 Create a Paper layer Open the start image from the disc and add a new layer. Name the layer 'Paper'. Click the Foreground colour swatch and choose a light beige colour from the Picker. Now click the Background swatch and choose a slightly darker shade. To create the paper effect layer, go to Filter>Render>Clouds. Photoshop will fill the layer using a mixture of your two chosen colours.

02 Pattern overlay We need to soften this effect a little, so go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Use a blur radius of 70-80 pixels. Now we'll add a paper texture. Go to Layer>New Fill Layer>Pattern. In the Pattern Fill dialog, click in the Pattern swatch. Hit the small right-pointing arrow at the side of the swatches and choose Artists' Surfaces. Hit OK to load the swatches.



03 Apply the pattern If you hover your mouse over the swatches you'll see the name of each pattern. Look for the Oil Pastel Light swatch and double-click it. Now grab the Scale slider and drag it to a value of 265. Click OK to apply the layer. In the Layers palette, choose Soft Light and set the layer opacity to 50%.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7 AND ABOVE

Resources

Photo credit

The starter photo for this tutorial was supplied by those fine folks over at Shutterstock (**www.shutterstock.com**). The company offers an exciting subscription service, where you pay a set fee for a certain amount of time, and can then download up to 750 royalty-free stock photos per month. There are thousands of images to choose from, all of exceptional quality. Our photo here was taken by C Docken, who has plenty of other images on the site. Prices start at £83.95 for a one-month subscription.

Expert Tip

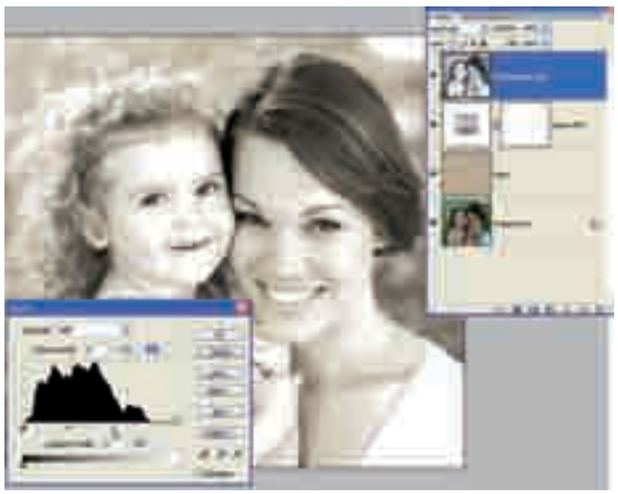
Graphics tablets

A pressure-sensitive graphics tablet gives more control with brushes than a mouse. When you use a tablet, in the Brush Dynamics palette you can set the brush's opacity to be controlled by the pressure you apply to the pressure-sensitive stylus. This saves changing the brush opacity in the Options bar all the time. For graphics tablets go to **www.wacom.com**.

THE FIRST DRAW

Bringing masks into play

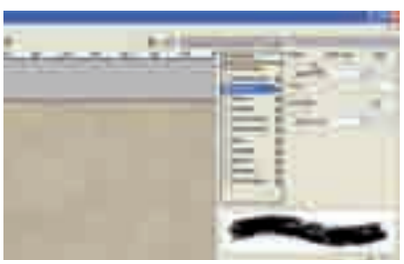
04 Drawing layer Now to create the first Drawing layer. Click on the original Background layer and go to Layer>Duplicate Layer, or hit Ctrl+J on the keyboard. Grab this duplicate layer in the Layers palette, and then drag and drop it above the Pattern layer. This layer needs to be black and white, so go to Image>Adjustments>Desaturate.



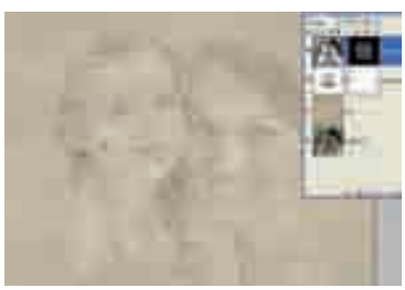
05 Adjust contrast The contrast of this layer needs changing, but first, in the Layers palette change the blending mode for this layer to Hard Light. To adjust the contrast, go to Image>Adjustments>Levels. Grab the White Point slider below the Histogram and drag it to the left to lighten the highlights. Stop when you reach an input level of 147 in the right-hand Input Level box.

06 Add a layer mask Now drag the Mid Point slider (grey) to the left to achieve an input level value of 0.80. Click OK to apply the changes. Double-click the name for this layer in the Layers palette and rename it 'Underpainting'. Now we need to completely hide this layer via a layer mask, so go to Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All.

07 Choose a brush We'll subtly reveal parts of this layer by painting onto the layer mask, but first we must choose and configure a brush. Select the Brush tool and click in the Brush Picker. Hit the small right-pointing arrow at the side of the Picker and choose Reset Brushes. Scroll down the list of brush thumbnails to the Charcoal Large Smear brush, and click on it.



08 Modify the dynamics Go to Window>Brushes to display the Brush Dynamics palette. In the left-hand side of the palette, remove the check marks from Other Dynamics, Color Dynamics and Shape Dynamics simply by clicking in the boxes. Click on the Scattering category and increase the Scatter slider to 250%. In the main Options bar, set the Brush opacity to 12%.



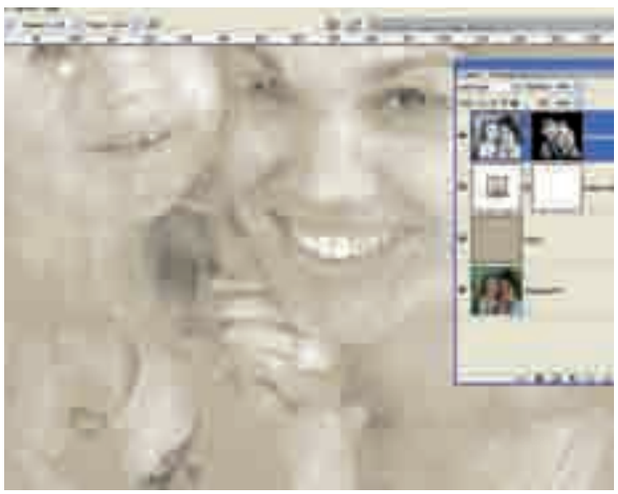
09 Start painting Hit D on the keyboard to revert to default foreground/background colours. Hit X to swap them so your foreground colour is white. Increase the brush size to around 125 pixels (use the right-facing square bracket keyboard key). Click the layer mask in the Layers palette. Now begin to brush over the central area of the image, using short dabs.

10 Broken brushwork Make sure to leave plenty of areas of paper showing through your brush marks , painting mostly only over the lightest parts of the faces and figures. Vary the direction of the strokes. Once you've covered most of the two faces and figures with these strokes, increase the Brush opacity to 25% in the Options bar. Now start to paint again over the lighter areas of the faces.

TIP | MAKE SURE YOU NAME YOUR LAYERS AS YOU CREATE THEM. IT MAKES FINDING WHAT YOU WANT FAR EASIER!

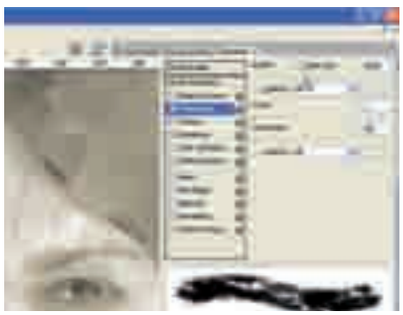
BUILDING UP THE EFFECT

Patience is mandatory!



11 Opaque strokes If you paint over too much of the faces, you can reveal areas of the paper layer by swapping foreground and background colours, and painting back into the image with black. Continue to paint with white into the faces, varying the size of the brush as you go. You can increase intensity of areas by painting them repeatedly, building up the opacity of the white on the mask.

12 Blurred layer Duplicate this layer by going to Layer>Duplicate Layer. Click the layer mask on the duplicate layer and go to Select>All. Now hit the Backspace key on the keyboard to delete the white areas on the duplicated mask. Click the image thumbnail for this layer and go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Adjust the blur radius to 45 pixels and hit OK.



13 Modify the brush This layer will create some smudged areas in the painting, but we need to modify the brush a little. Hit F5 to open the Brush Dynamics palette, click the Scattering category and set Scattering to 385%. In the Options bar reduce the opacity to 20%. Increase the brush size to 300 pixels.

14 More brushwork Click on the layer mask for this blurred layer and ensure your foreground colour is white. Now paint with this brush around the outside of the heads. Again, use short strokes and vary their direction. What we want here are some fairly random strokes to blend the heads into the background paper.

15 Sketch layer Click the Background layer and go to Layer>Duplicate Layer. In the Layers palette, drag this duplicate to the top of the layer stack. Desaturate it via Image> Adjustments>Desaturate. In the Layers palette, set the blending mode to Luminosity. Rename the layer 'Sketch'. Now go to Image>Adjustments> Levels. Enter these values into the Input Levels boxes from left to right: 0, 1.34, 207. Hit OK.

16 Another brush Set the blending mode for this layer to Luminosity. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All. We need to use another brush for this Sketch layer. With the Brush tool active, click in the Brush Picker. Scroll down the brush thumbnails and locate the Chalk brush. In the Brush Dynamics palette, click the Texture category and set the Scale slider to 165%.

17 Dark strokes Make sure your foreground colour is white. Reduce the size of the brush to 20 pixels or so, and click on the layer mask for this layer. Zoom into the image and begin to place short diagonal strokes over the facial features. Remember to keep varying the angle of your strokes, overlaying strokes at opposite angles to create a rough cross-hatching effect in the darkest areas.

Expert Tip

Layer masks in isolation

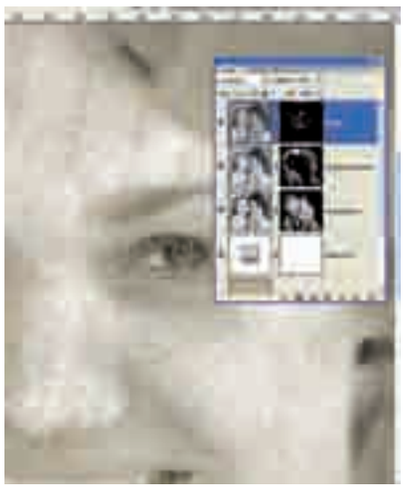
Normally, when you're working on a layer mask you only see the result of your masking as various degrees of transparency on the target image layer itself. However, you can actually view the mask in isolation, and see the various tones of black, white and grey that create the different levels of transparency. Simply hold down the Alt key and click the Layer Mask thumbnail in the Layers palette. Alt-click again to return to the Normal view.

Tool tip

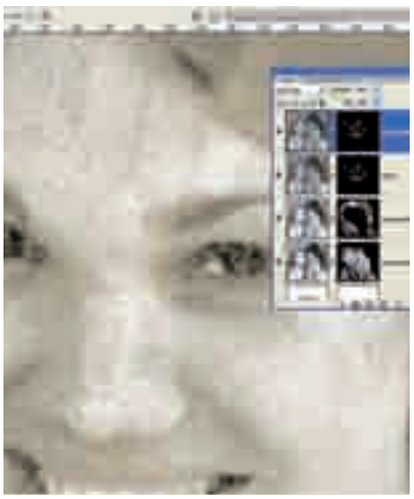
All about masks

What exactly do layer masks do? They let you hide or reveal parts of a layer. A mask filled with black hides the associated image layer. If you use shades of grey on a mask, that makes the associated image layer partially transparent. In this project we use white at varying levels of opacity, and in layer mask terms this means that where we brush, the areas of the layer under the brush marks on the mask are visible in the image. It's vital that before you start to paint you click on the thumbnail for the layer mask, so you paint on the mask itself and NOT the associated image layer. To make sure, check for a bold outline around the thumbnail of the mask.

THE TINY DETAILS…
…make all the difference



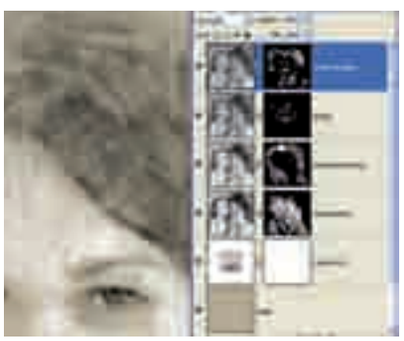
18 Scribble and hatch Increase the opacity of the brush to 75% in the Options bar. Now place the same kind of scribbled strokes over the darkest areas of the facial features. This can be rather time-consuming, but it pays to take your time and place many small strokes close together to create areas of very finely sketched shading.



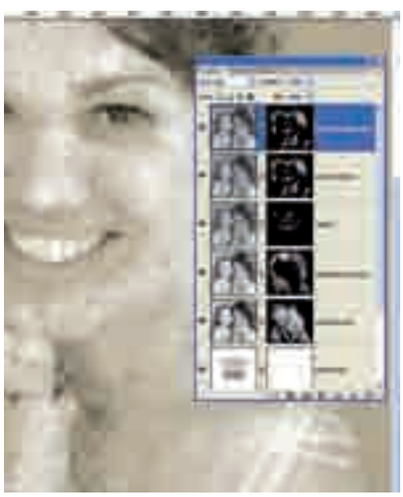
19 Add more darks Go to Layer>Duplicate Layer. Set the blending mode for this layer to Hard Light. Make sure to click on the layer mask for this layer. Still using white as the foreground, increase the brush size a little and begin to hatch again over the darker areas in the faces. You'll see the details of the features appear as you work.

KNOW YOUR BRUSHES
Find out more about the brushes we use in this project

Charcoal Large Smear This brush is the one we'll use to establish the initial underpainting. The brush comes complete with texture, which you can increase or reduce via the Brush Dynamics palette.
Chalk brush Here's a much sharper, chalk-like brush which we'll use for the defining drawing that holds the whole piece together. Use at a very small size, and at varying opacities.
It's black and white! This illustration shows exactly how the brushes appear when using white as the foreground colour and painting onto the black-filled masks we're using here. Remember, brushes used at low opacities create grey strokes.
Pastel Medium Tip brush This one hides away in the Dry Media Brushes library. This pastel brush is much softer than the other two we're using, and we'll use it in the project to add subtle colour and soft highlights.



20 Bold sketching Increase the brush size to 50 or 60 pixels, and add some bolder sketchy lines to the hair area and the larger blocks of dark tones between the figures. Make sure to use lots of different angles and vary the brush opacity in the Options bar as you go.



21 Sketched highlights By sketching in some of the light areas of the two figures, you can add some sketch lines to create highlights. Use the same directional strokes, working over the same areas again to intensify some of the sketched areas. Now duplicate this layer and then set the blending mode for the duplicate to Soft Light.

22 More brushed highlights Click on the layer mask attached to the Underpainting layer. Increase the brush size to around 70 pixels and set the opacity to 75% in the Options bar. Now, still painting with white onto the layer mask, paint a few bright highlights into the faces and figures. Make these areas of brushwork loose and sketchy.

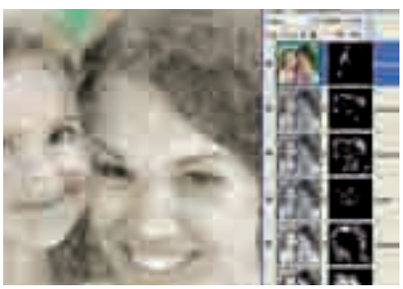
NEXT ISSUE | CHECK OUT NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE FOR A SPECIAL FEATURE AND TUTORIAL ON USING PHOTOSHOP BRUSHES

COLOUR FOR EFFECT

Bring out detail for the final flourishes

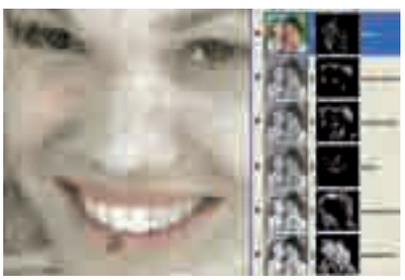
23 A new brush
Before we add some colour, we need to choose a new brush. With the Brush tool active, click in the Brush Picker. Hit the small arrow in the Picker and choose Dry Media Brushes. Click OK. Locate the Pastel Medium Tip brush and double-click to choose it.

24 Levels and saturation
Click the Background layer and duplicate it. Drag it to the top of the layer stack. Go to Image> Adjustments>Levels. Drag the White Point slider about a third of the way to the left; drag the Mid Point slider a little way left to lighten the midtones. Hit OK. Go to Image> Adjustments>Hue/ Saturation. Drag the Saturation slider to the right, to a value of +25.

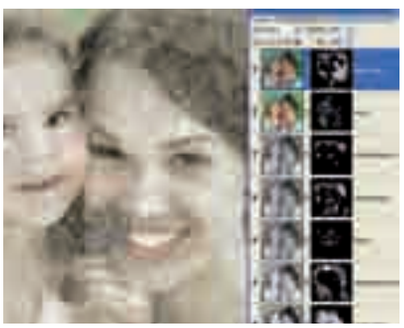


25 Brush in colour Set the blending mode for this Colour layer to Darken. Add a layer mask to this Colour layer via Layer> Layer Mask>Hide All. Reduce the brush opacity to 35% in the Options bar. Increase the size of the brush to 150 pixels. Now, using white for the foreground, begin to paint here and there over the figures to add hints of colour.

26 More colour Paint a little around the figures to expose some of the colour from the background behind the figures. Because you're using the brush at low opacity, the more you work over a particular area, the more intense the colour will become.



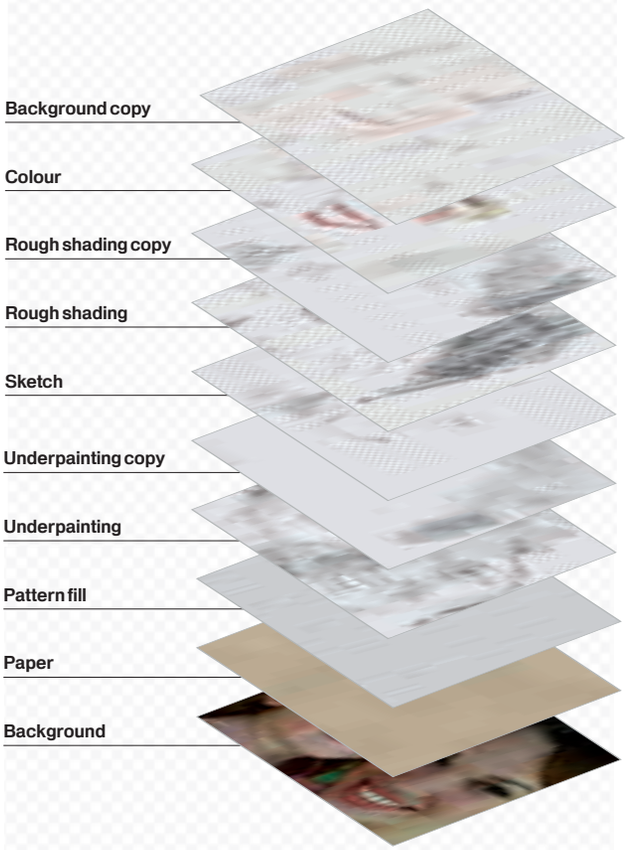
27 Facial colour Reduce the size of the brush and paint roughly over the main features in the faces to add a little more intense colour. Now duplicate this layer and set the blending mode for the duplicate layer to Linear Burn. Click the layer mask for the layer and go to Edit>Fill, choosing Black for Contents. Reduce the layer opacity to 15%.



28 Colour in shadows Increase the brush size to 300 pixels and paint roughly over the shadow areas on the faces. This effect will be very subtle, adding just a hint of colour and tone. Finally, when happy with the result, flatten the image via Layer>Flatten Image.

The layer structure

How we got that chalky look



Retouching tools

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

REMOVE WRINKLES
SMOOTH SKIN

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Matthew Henry

ON THE CD
original girl

Remove forehead and neck lines, laughter lines, eyebag wrinkles and crows feet – and just about any other wrinkle that stands in the way of smooth, ageless skin

You can roll back the years with this wrinkle-removing technique or, if you're working with someone fairly youthful, use it simply to soften the crease lines of an expressive face.

We'll be using four wrinkle-removal tools: Spot Healing/Healing, Clone Stamp, Patch and the common Brush tool. Each has its own use and advantages, which will become clear.

The Spot Healing (CS2 only) and Healing brushes are fantastic at working away wrinkles in areas of fairly even tone, where there's little change in lightness or contrast in proximate detail. This means all areas of the forehead and neck, bar the very edges where hair or background detail can leave you with a blurry mess.

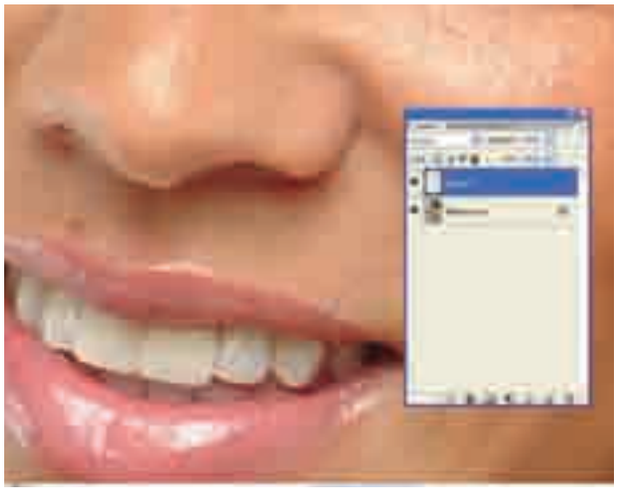
In these situations, the Clone Stamp is king (great for eye wrinkles too). As the Clone Stamp doesn't have the blending properties of the Healing brushes, it's best used in Lighten mode and at a reduced opacity of 50%.

The Patch tool works best on larger areas where tone alters slightly, such as the cheeks where the contours provide subtle changes in shading. Healing can trip up here. As we get close to the nose, Healing or Patch won't work, and we want to keep the area of shadow that suggests cheekbone definition, so soften things with a lightening layer, the Brush and a nearby colour.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS AND ABOVE, PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3 AND ABOVE

REMOVE WRINKLES

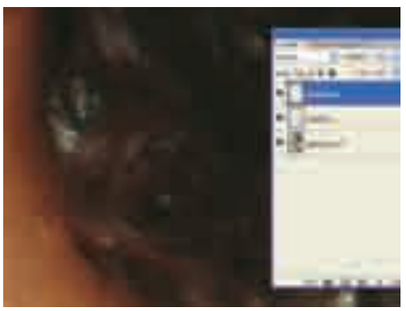
Create some smooth skin



01 Analysis Open the tutorial file from the disc. The first thing we need to do is create a new layer with the appropriate icon at the bottom of the Layers palette, then we move around the image to have a good look at any problem areas by hitting the 'F' key for Full-screen mode, holding down the Spacebar and then dragging.

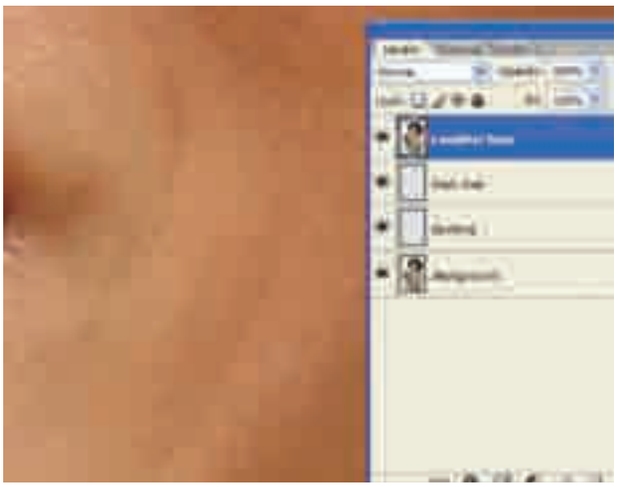
02 Blemishes Next, rename the layer 'Spotting' and start by removing any small blemishes. Select the Spot Healing brush (CS2 only) or Healing brush, make sure it's set to Sample All Layers in the Tool Options bar then work away all spots and moles. For those blemishes that Healing doesn't do the business for, switch to the Clone Stamp tool instead.

03 Neck lines Now create a new layer and name it 'Neck lines'. Select Spot Healing or Healing and click away at the neck lines bit by bit with a brush considerably larger than the line thickness. Don't be tempted to click and drag along the neck line.

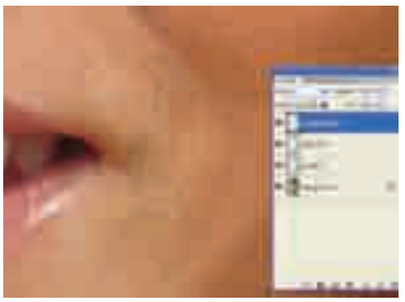


04 Under the chin For the very stubborn crease lines just under the chin where Healing tends to make a mess, we're better off using the Clone Stamp tool set to Lighten mode at about 50% brush opacity. Source underneath and work over a couple of times, resourcing the second time.

05 Close to hair The same technique can be used for the neck line areas that approach the edge of the neck and hair. Here Healing brushes tend to stumble, and Clone Stamp in Lightness mode is king. Work them away slowly until all traces are removed.



06 Laughter lines Next, create a new layer and hold down Alt/Option while you click the triangle at the top right of the Layers palette to access the menu. Keep the button pressed, and select Merge Visible. A merged version of all your corrections so far is created on the new layer. Name this layer 'Laughter lines'.



07 Patching up Press Shift+J to cycle through to the Patch tool, then carefully draw around your first laughter crease line, including a fair bit of surrounding information. Now move the pointer inside the selection and click and drag to an area of clean skin further out on the cheek.

Tip

Non-destructive edits

You don't need to use the Clone Stamp or Healing tools on your background layer, or even a duplicate layer that adds to file size. Instead, create a blank layer and just ensure the tools are set to Sample All Layers in the Tool Options bar. If you don't like the work done, discard the layer and start again. The Brush tool should also be used on a new layer – Patch is the only one that requires base info to work on.

Expert Tip

Patch strategy

A disadvantage of Patch is that we have to duplicate info first with Merge Visible, which makes permanent any work we've done below, as it won't show through. A solution is to do Patch work first, so anything above can still be altered when you're done – you can fine-tune the opacity of each layer to show a little wrinkle detail through if you don't want things to look overly smooth.

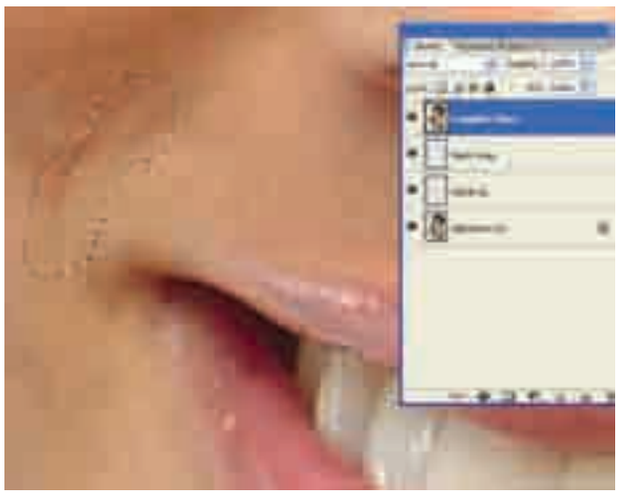
Tool School

Brush care

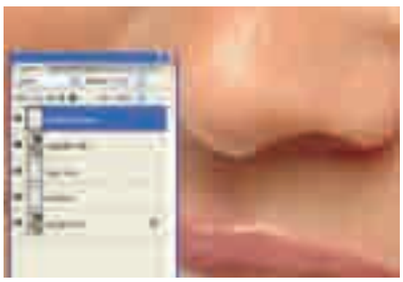
When you use the Brush to work over areas like cheekbone creases, you're masking detail with solid colour. At 100% this'll look like a block of colour and very artificial. Reduce layer opacity to ensure enough detail shows through to keep it looking real. Using layer opacity rather than brush opacity lets you chop and change to suit.

IMAGE-CONSCIOUS

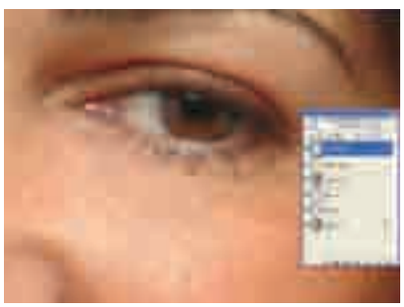
Polishing up that look



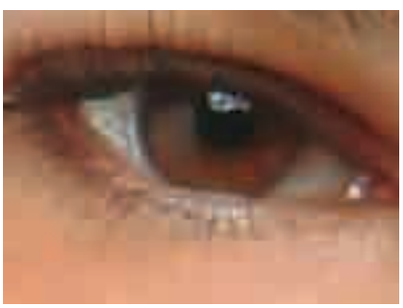
08 **Cheekbone creases** Repeat this for the other crease lines, but don't touch the large crease areas either side of the nose that border the cheek bones with the Patch tool. Instead, create a new layer and set it to Lighten and name it 'Cheek creases'. Select a soft-edged brush and set it to 50% opacity.



09 **Brushing over** Sample a lighter area near the crease shadow by holding down Alt/Option, then carefully brush over your shadow. Repeat with another sampled colour. Do the same for the other crease shadow then drop the layer opacity to suit and show some underlying detail so that things don't look too smooth.



10 **Eye wrinkles** Forget the Healing tools on the eye bags, as they're so close to the eye that you haven't got a chance. Instead, create a new 'Eye wrinkles' layer and use the Clone Stamp tool set to Lighten at 50% opacity to carefully work the lines away. Resource information repeatedly with the Alt/Option key.



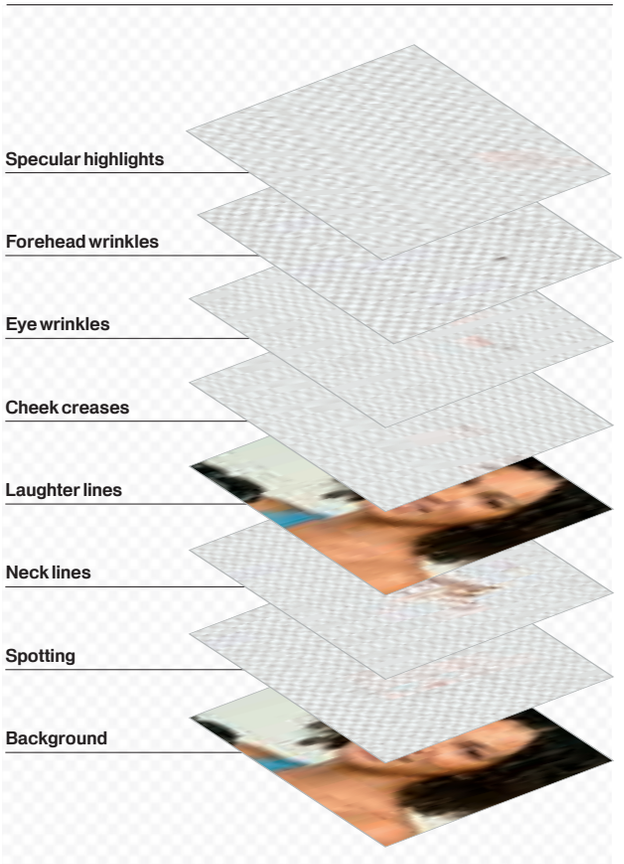
11 **Between eyelashes** Be very careful when deleting wrinkles that sit underneath the eyelashes. You'll have to move between them carefully, sourcing information from below. When you've sorted the wrinkles below the eye, remove any 'crows feet' lines at the edges of the eye.

12 **Forehead wrinkles** Next, add another new layer and name it 'Forehead wrinkles'. Use the Spot Healing or Healing brush to carefully delete any forehead lines – again click-by-click rather than dragging across the whole lines. Where lines meet hair at the edge of the head, change to Clone Stamp.

13 **Specular highlights** Finish off by adding one more layer to reduce specular highlights on the cheek and nose. Set the layer to Darken, take a soft brush at 50% opacity and sample a colour from close to the highlight patches. Work over the patches, and then drop the layer opacity to suit.

The layer structure

Beneath the surface



eMag

Focus on Color Range

Making selections according to colour is an extremely intuitive and speedy process. See how it's done using the Color Range command

We all want to make accurate selections in our work and if those selections can be made quickly, so much the better.

When it comes to selecting objects, most people gravitate towards the toolbar and use the Pen tool or Lasso tools for their selection needs. But there's another very good command nestled, funnily enough, under the Select menu. Here you'll find the Color Range option, which allows you to select a specific colour in an image. You might want to select an object to use in a different composition, or maybe you need to boost colours in a photo but only want to target certain hues.

The Color Range will help you do this without breaking a sweat. Although it's similar to the Magic Wand, the Color Range gives you more options for tweaking your selection and you can see a preview of the final selection without having to commit first. Have a look at what it can do here, and maybe it'll find a way into your selection process.

Sample selection Use this drop-down menu to pick how you make a selection – using the eyedropper to pick a colour or using a preset.
Fuzzy Wuzzy wuz a bear…
The Fuzziness slider dictates how strong your selection is. The higher it goes, the more extreme (and sometimes more inaccurate) the selection is.

Feeling fuzzy

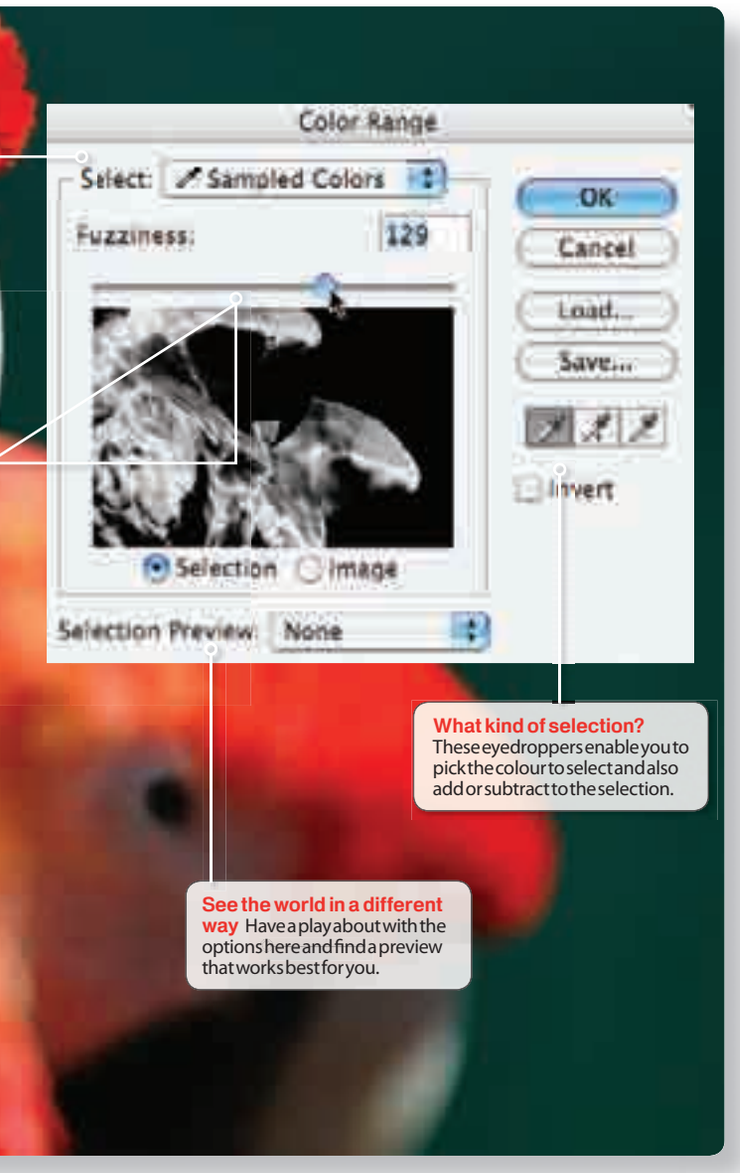
The most common method

To make a quick selection with the Color Range command, open up your image and then go to the Select > Color Range menu. Your cursor will turn into an eyedropper – simply hover over your image and click on the colour that you want to select. Now move the Fuzziness slider to determine how much or how little of the colour you picked is selected. If you have set None in the Selection Preview, the white will show you what has been selected.

Picking a preview

A different view

The Selection Preview drop-down menu allows you to change how you view your selection. When set to None, the preview only exists in the small box in the Color Range dialog. Pick Grayscale and the image becomes a big preview area. The preview also looks as it would in a grayscale channel. Black Matte puts the selection against a black background, while White Matte (can you guess) puts it against a white background. The Quick Mask option will use the current Quick Mask settings. Because the Selection Preview methods use the entire image area, you can see your selection far easier.


Color Range
Select: Sampled Colors
Fuzziness: 129
OK
Cancel
Load...
Save...
Invert
Selection
Image
Selection Preview: None
What kind of selection? These eyedroppers enable you to pick the colour to select and also add or subtract to the selection.
See the world in a different way Have a play about with the options here and find a preview that works best for you.

Tip

Save your work

If you have found a setting you're particularly pleased with, don't forget that you can save your settings ready for use in another project.

Tip

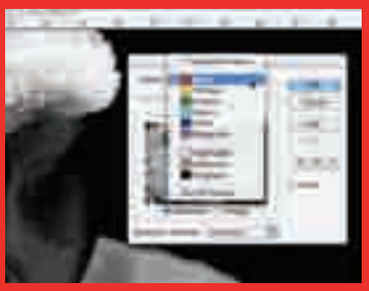
Creative accents

Have you ever seen those images where part of the picture is repeated? Instead of trying to make those selections, use the Color Range tool to pick out colours. You will find that this is an excellent way of pulling out specific elements of an image to be used in a creative way.

Preset selections

Let Photoshop make the decisions

One helpful feature of the Color Range command is its store of preset selection options. To access them, go to the Select drop-down and you'll see a row of choices.



01 The colours If you can't be bothered to click on an image and pick a colour, or you want a general colour selection, use one of the preset hues from the Select menu.

02 Living the highlight A common problem with digital photos is that the highlights get blown out. To fix these, select them using the Highlights option in the Color Range command and then edit!

03 Boost exposure If you have an image that's a tad on the underexposed side, pick Shadows from the Select menu and then use another command to sort them out!

View selection or image?

More choices!

Under the Preview window is two options. The default setting, Selection, will display the selection you're making. However, if you are working on a big image that extends beyond the document window, you'll need to scroll about to get to different areas. But there is a better way. The Image option shows the whole image in the preview, so you can reach all of your image to make selections.

You want more?

Add or remove selections

One excellent feature of the Color Range command is the ability to add or subtract from your selection. This is really easy to do – just go to the row of three eyedropper icons and pick the one with the Plus sign to add to the selection, or pick the one with the Minus sign to subtract. Once you have picked an eyedropper, simply click on the image in order to pick the colour to add or subtract.

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- LAYERS
- GRADIENTS
- INNER GLOW
- SELECTION TOOLS
- BLUR FILTER
- PATHS

Produce realistic wood textures

You can download wood textures, but it's much more fun to create your own from scratch and customise them!

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
20 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Zoe Mutter

Creating your own personalised textures makes working in Photoshop so much easier, because you have a fuller texture library that you can refer to for similar projects in the future.

There are many occasions when you may create an object and want to fill its surface with a texture. Or perhaps you would like to create a surface to act as a background, such as a worktop. This is all easy to achieve in Photoshop. Rather than using existing photographs of surface textures, you can produce your own completely from scratch.

The advantage of making your own textures rather than downloading or purchasing them is that you can customise them more, and because you're using random filters you can experiment and apply them as many times as you like until you're happy with the result.

There are multiple types of surface texture you can create, but one that's fairly commonly required is the wood texture. This is particularly good, because there are different variations on the wood effect that can be created by selecting various blending modes or opacities for layers. You can also apply additional filters, such as the Noise filter, to increase the texture of the wood or accentuate the grain using the Levels Adjustment feature.

The possibilities are never ending, so begin creating some exciting new additions to your texture library by simply following our step-by-step tutorial on the next page.

GET THAT WOODY LOOK

It's all done with filters

01 Create a new document Create a document that's larger than needed. We chose File>New and entered the dimensions 500 x 500 pixels. Right-click on the background layer and choose Layer From Background to convert your background layer into a normal one. Call this layer 'Lower wood texture'. Ensure your foreground colour is black and the background colour is white by hitting the D key.

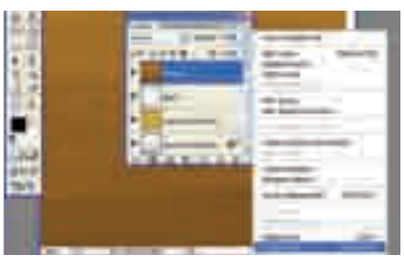
02 Generate fibres Select Filter> Render>Fibers, enter 1 in the Variance box and the Strength box. Create a visible wood texture by hitting Randomize until a light texture shows in the Preview window. To add colour, hit Add Layer Style at the bottom of the Layers palette and pick Color Overlay. Set the blend mode to Linear Burn, click the colour swatch in the Layer Styles window; enter Red 210, Green 175, Blue 90.

03 Choose the foreground and background colours Press OK, and in the main window click on the swatch for the foreground colour to bring up the Color Picker and enter the values Red 190, Green 130 and Blue 45. Now click on the background colour swatch and enter the values Red 220, Green 175 and Blue 40. The Fibers filter needs some colour to work with when creating the effect.

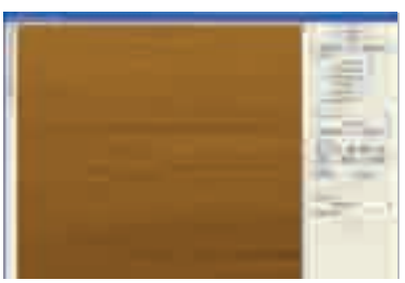
04 Further fibres Create a new layer called 'Upper wood texture' and set its blending mode to Multiply. Choose the Paint Bucket tool and click to fill the layer with the foreground colour. Select Filter>Render>Fibers. Enter 7 into the Variance box and 50 into the Strength box. If the grain is too dark, for example, in the Preview window press the Randomize button until a lighter shade is displayed.

05 Magical modes Create a new layer and call it 'Grain'. Set the blending mode of the layer to Multiply. Choose Edit>Fill, and from the Use menu that appears choose White and select Multiply from the Mode menu. Press OK to fill the layer with white.

06 Rougher grain Press D to make the foreground/background black/white. Go to Filter>Render>Fibers, enter 1 in the Variance box, 50 in the Strength box and use Randomize to find a light effect. Add noise via Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Enter a 35% value and hit Monochromatic.



07 Using the texture We chose Image> Rotate Canvas>90 CC to make our grain horizontal. To use the texture in other images, you need to merge layers. Create a layer and move it to the top of the Layers palette. Hold down Apple (Mac)/Alt (PC) while clicking the arrow in the right of the palette and hit Merge Visible. This merges all layers into the top layer, ready to copy/paste in other documents, keeping other layers intact.



08 Get knotted Give your wood a realistic feel by adding knots. With the top merged layer selected go to Filter>Liquify. To see your wood texture, check Show Backdrop in the View options and raise the opacity. Select the Forward Warp tool on a Brush size of 50 and push out either side of a point along the grain, creating a knot. Zoom in to see the effect more clearly.

09 So many options Vary the size of the knots using a different sized brush or sweep along the grain with the Twirl tool on a low Brush pressure. You can achieve many types of grain by changing the overlay colour for the 'Lower wood texture' layer or altering the settings for the Fibers filter. Try setting the Grain layer to a different mode or lowering its opacity, as we did to create this alternative wood texture.

Tool School

Last-minute adjustments

If your grains appear too dark or too light, this can be rectified by picking Image> Adjustments> Levels. Move the black Output slider to the right to darken the grains, or move the white Input slider to the left in order to lighten them.

Tip

Make a frame

To create a wooden frame use the Rectangular Marquee to select a section from your wood texture. Copy and paste into a new document and duplicate three times for the sides. To produce the edges use the Polygonal Lasso Tool and cut away a triangular shape from the top layer. Create the line and colour difference at the corners by adjusting the brightness of two opposite edges by choosing Image> Adjustments> Brightness/Contrast. After merging the layers add a drop shadow to the frame

From this...
...to this

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
20-30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Zoe Mutter

ON THE CD
buildings.jpg

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

CLIPPING MASKS
OCEAN RIPPLE, GLASS AND CLOUDS FILTERS
TRANSFORM/ PERSPECTIVE TECHNIQUES

Create water reflections

The correct combination of transformation techniques and watery filters will allow you to create fantastically realistic ripply reflections

Do you have a photo that would benefit from the addition of an impressive watery expanse? This is straightforward to achieve in Photoshop, but will need a few nifty reflection techniques.

Reflections can be created in surfaces such as metal fairly easily, but when it comes to producing reflections in water there are a few things to take into consideration in order to make it look realistic. You'll be creating the effect of motion and need to decide how much ripple and movement you want your area of water to have. This is all made possible using a combination of the filters in Photoshop such as Ocean Ripple, Clouds and Glass. By experimenting with the different settings it's possible to produce an array of different watery reflection variations.

We have chosen a cityscape for our image and transformed the grassy area into an expanse of water in front of the buildings. However, this effect can be equally successfully applied to a variety of images, not only of landscapes but of people and objects.

To add more ambience to a cityscape, why not try out this technique with a photo taken at night? In addition to blurring the entire reflected image of the buildings, it can also enhance the realism if you selectively blur areas more dramatically by referring to our tip.

Some experimentation may be needed to achieve the correct perspective and amount of reflected image, but by following our steps you can create a watery rippled surface entirely from scratch and transform this image's area of lawn into liquid.

ON REFLECTION…
Create a watery wonder

01 Increase the canvas Open 'buildings.jpg' from the disc. Right-click on the background layer and choose Create Layer from Background. Choose Image>Canvas Size and enter a Height of 19.5 cm (greater than the original image height). Click OK and use the Move tool to drag the layer with the buildings image onto the top of the canvas.

02 Make your selection Use the Rectangular Marquee tool to drag out across the grassy area from just below the railings. Create a new layer and call it 'Mask'. Use the Paint Bucket tool to fill the selection with colour. Press Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect. Choose a small, hard-edged brush and go along the upper edge of the filled area, making it less rigid.

03 Blur to create a fluid edge Choose the Blur tool and go along the ripply edge we created with the brush to blur it slightly. Ensure the Mask layer is above the Buildings layer. Right-click the Buildings layer and pick Duplicate Layer. Finally, go to Edit>Transform> Flip Vertical.

Tool School

Realistic random area

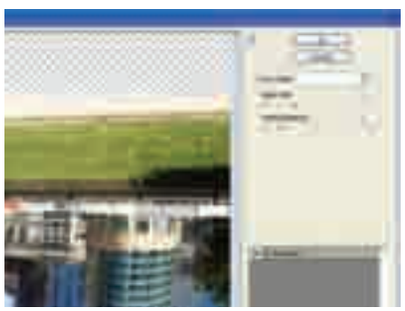
To create random areas of more blur, choose the Lasso tool and enter a value of 20 into the Feather box. With the Reflection layer selected, create a random selection within the watery area. Choose Blur>Motion Blur, enter an Amount of about 15 and leave the Angle at 0. Increase to get a more dramatic blurred effect.

HIDING BEHIND A MASK

Become confident with using clipping masks

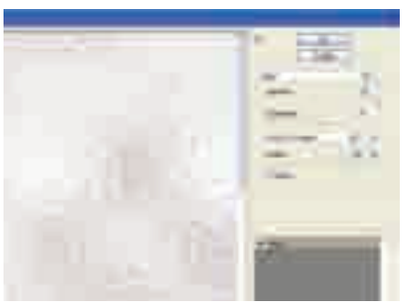
04 Clip it Call this new layer 'Reflection'. Move it above the Mask layer. Right-click on the Reflection layer and choose Create Clipping Mask. This will now mean that your reflected image will appear in the area you created in the Mask layer.

05 Realistic reflection Choose the Move tool, and with the Reflection layer selected use it to move the reflected buildings so that not all of them are visible. Due to the angle, not all of the tree and pavement area would be visible, so make sure that roughly the same amount of the reflected building is visible as in our image.



06 Ripple effects With the Reflection layer selected, choose Filter>Distort>Ocean Ripple and enter a value of 5 as the Ripple Size and 3 as the Ripple Magnitude. Choose Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and apply a blur Amount of about 20 to the Reflection layer.

07 Make the reflection watery Create a new document measuring the same width as our image, but over double the height. We created a new document measuring 19.51cm in width and 25cm in height. The reason the document is larger is that we'll squash the ripples down later when they are pasted into the other document. Choose Filter>Render>Clouds.



08 Filter fantastic Next, select Filter>Distort>Glass and enter a Distortion of 20, Smoothness of 8 and Scaling of 160%. Make sure that Frosted is chosen as the texture and click OK. Now choose Select>All, Edit>Copy and then move across to the other document.

09 Opacity alterations Select Edit>Paste to paste it onto a new layer. Name it 'Ripple 1'. Move it below the Reflection layer. Choose Edit>Free Transform and reduce Ripple 1 in height so it's the same size and place as the reflected buildings at the bottom of the canvas. Reduce the opacity of Ripple 1 to 67% and the Reflection layer to 50%.

10 Double the ripple Move to the rippled document and copy/paste it to the other document. Call this layer 'Ripple 2' and move it below the Reflection layer but above Ripple 1. These should also have a small arrow appear next to their layer thumbnail to indicate they'll clip to the area created in the Mask layer.

11 Getting the right perspective Reduce the opacity of the Ripple 2 layer to 80% and change the blending mode to Multiply. To make the perspective of the ripples more realistic, click on Ripple 2 and pick Edit>Transform>Perspective. Drag the bottom left and right handles out so the ripples at the bottom are more dispersed. Repeat for the Ripple 1 layer.

TIP | HAVE A LOOK AT REAL PHOTOS OF REFLECTIONS TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE PERSPECTIVE WORKS

eMag

THE BIG TECHNIQUE

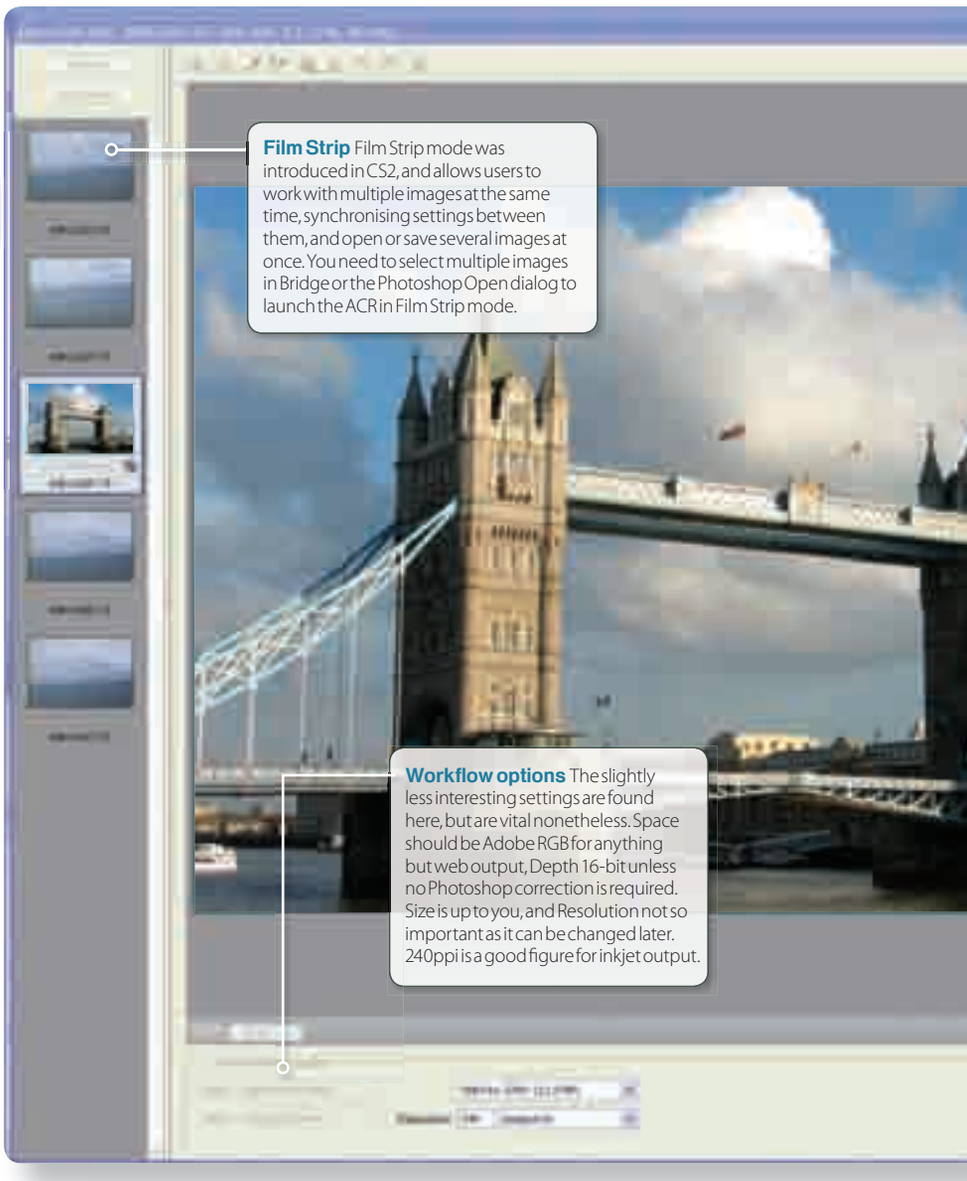
Work with Camera Raw

Get the most from your images with Adobe Camera Raw

You may already have heard how Raw is the best way to go if you're concerned about your images' quality. If you haven't, we're telling you now!

Most digicams now have a Raw setting. The 'Raw' file comprises data captured directly from a camera sensor. It needs processing before it can be viewed or edited, and a Raw converter like the Camera Raw plug-in in Photoshop does the job.

One of the advantages of post-capture Raw conversion is you have access to 16-bit data, which means millions more shades of colour than 8-bit, as in JPEG. This comes into its own if you're making Photoshop corrections, which always discard some colour info. The more you have, the more you can edit without noticing this. Edits at the Raw processing stage are also lossless, meaning no data is discarded. If it all goes wrong in-camera with Raw, you can remedy things. Get it wrong with JPEG, and you may need a miracle!


Film Strip Film Strip mode was introduced in CS2, and allows users to work with multiple images at the same time, synchronising settings between them, and open or save several images at once. You need to select multiple images in Bridge or the Photoshop Open dialog to launch the ACR in Film Strip mode.
Workflow options The slightly less interesting settings are found here, but are vital nonetheless. Space should be Adobe RGB for anything but web output, Depth 16-bit unless no Photoshop correction is required. Size is up to you, and Resolution not so important as it can be changed later. 240ppi is a good figure for inkjet output.

The Adjust tab

Mastering the Adjust tab

The Adjust tab is where you'll do most of your tweaking, and it handles a lot of the stuff you might use Curves and Levels to sort in Photoshop. Exposure should be used for the bulk of the lightening and darkening, but it focuses most on the highlights, so be wary of moving it too far right in case of highlight clipping. Brightness functions more on the midtones, so is good for lightening images where you're already quite close to clipping. Shadows determines how dark your darkest tone is, and pushes everything else along accordingly. It's best kept very low to avoid clipping. The Contrast slider does a better job of darkening shadows without actually clipping info. Hold down Alt/Option when you move either the Exposure slider or the Shadow slider to launch the Threshold Clipping Display. If colour starts to appear, you've clipped info, so move the slider back a little.

The tools

Tool up at the top

The tools run across the top of the ACR window and can all be accessed with single letter shortcuts. Zoom (Z) does as you would expect, though the Ctrl/Cmd and '+' or '-' shortcuts are quicker. The same goes for the Hand tool (H) and the Spacebar. The White Balance tool (I) neutralises white balance with a single click on diffuse highlights (which work better than greys), the Color Sampler tool (S) enables you to plot a point and view its colour values as you make changes. The Crop tool (C) and Rotate (L and R) do as you'd expect, and CS2's Straighten tool (A) fixes wonky horizons.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS AND ABOVE

The Histogram Shows you exactly what's happening to your tonal range as you adjust the sliders. Shadows are on the left and highlights on the right side. Be careful not to push information off the edges, as this is symptomatic of clipping, where detail is lost. Info should taper down slowly at the end.

Settings menus The first drop-down menu allows you to reset any changes to the original starting point, or Camera Raw defaults and back again if needs be, and the menu to the right lets you save settings and new Camera Raw Defaults for your images. You can turn off Auto-Adjustments here too.

Adjustments The main adjustment section comprises all of the fun settings in a range of different tabs. The Adjust tab houses the basics such as White Balance, Exposure, Shadows, Brightness, Contrast and Saturation. The others are for more advanced users.

Tip

Clipping previews

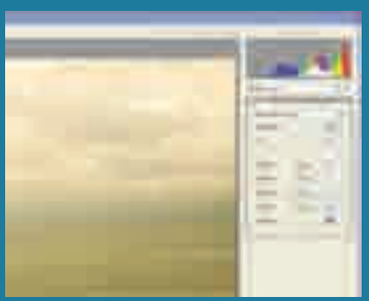
Check the Shadow and Highlight boxes at the top of the ACR dialog to see where information in your image is being clipped. Red shows Highlight clipping and Blue shows Shadow clipping.

White Balance

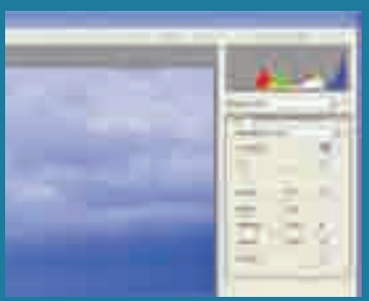
Neutralise a colour cast or use it creatively

Light has a colour temperature that the eye adapts to but cameras don't. To ensure your image is looks as the eye saw it, you need to neutralise any colour cast.

01 Neutral A neutral image will have pure whites. By selecting the White Balance tool (I) and clicking on a diffuse white area that should be neutral, you can remove any colour cast. Or do it manually with the sliders.



02 Warm tone A neutral white balance isn't always what's wanted. Sometimes we need a colour cast effect. Increasing the Temperature by moving the slider to the right warms the image, giving a summery feel.

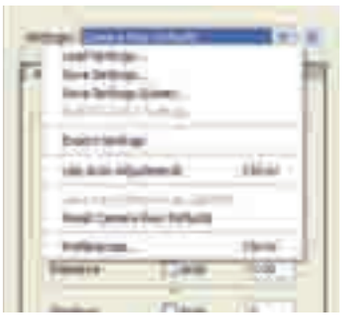


03 Cool tone Moving the slider left to reduce the Temperature cools the image, adding a bluey cast for an atmospheric feel. Tint adds either Green or Magenta, but can look unreal, so is often best left neutral.

Tweaking settings

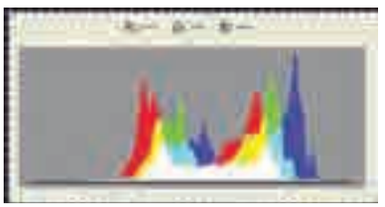
Speed up workflow with settings

If you're using CS2, by default the Auto-Adjustments are loaded, correcting things like Exposure and Contrast automatically. This isn't always helpful as you can't see your image first in its unaltered state, which will tell you if you've under or overexposed and the like. You can turn Auto-Adjustments off with Ctrl/Cmd+U, and it's a good idea once you've done this to click the Settings sub-menu and choose Save New Camera Raw Defaults. You can also save settings as a whole for setups that work for you, or settings subsets, which let you pick combinations of any of the settings and save those to apply at a later date without affecting the other settings. Settings and settings subsets, once named and saved, can be accessed from the main Settings drop-down menu.



The Histogram function

Understanding how it works



Histograms take the form of a graph, representing tonality in numbers from 0 to 255 (black to white), going from left to right. The height in the graph shows you how much of the particular tone can be found in the image. Ideally, the information should taper down to negligible values at either end. If it hasn't, it means some of the data is being clipped, or rendered as pure black or pure white, meaning no detail is present at all. This typifies the nasty burnt-out highlights of overexposure, or the heavy, clogged black shadows of underexposure.

IN THE RAW

Get the best quality from your images

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Matthew Henry

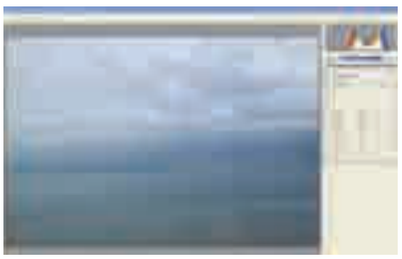
ON THE CD

Source raw file

Tip

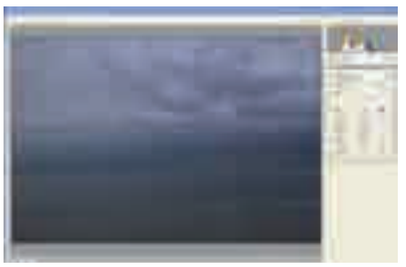
Save Settings

Use Save Settings subsets to tailor the Detail and Lens tab settings for certain ISO settings, lens or sharpening choices. You can then access them from the Settings drop-down menu.

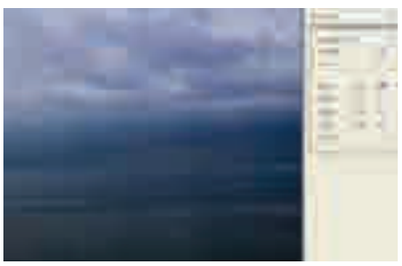


01 Check WB and histogram We open our image with Camera Raw defaults and Auto Adjustments turned off. The White Balance setting is set to As Shot, which sources from the camera's White Balance preset, and has produced a blue cast. A glance at the histogram shows low contrast, with no clipping – the info is focused in the midtone area.

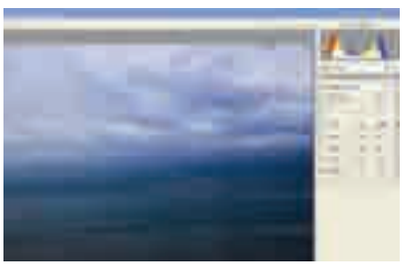
02 Acceptable defects The blue cast gave a nautical feel, but the image is still a bit dull. We increase Exposure to produce a light airiness. The histogram shows we've clipped detail, but as it's the sky area and it rolls off nicely without being too noticeable, it doesn't matter.



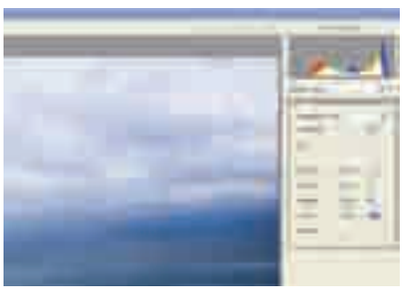
03 Exposure experiment Next, we experiment with a much more low-key look, by dropping the Exposure slider right down. The image looks more like a night-time scene now with storm clouds, and has quite an atmosphere of foreboding. Note though, that Shadows are still nowhere near the endpoint – there are still no very dark tones in shot.



04 The low-key version We try a different tact now, holding down Alt/Option while we move the Shadow slider inwards, coming right to the clipping point so that we can turn our darker tones as dark as possible without clipping. But we push the Exposure slider back, so highlight tones are lighter. Notice the difference now.



05 Contrast increase Boosting contrast can have a similar effect, making lighter tones lighter and darker tones darker, but it's shy of the darkest and lightest tones, so Shadows and Exposure are needed to get truly popping whites and rich blacks. We use Contrast here instead, to boost the effect we have already created.



06 Focus on midtones Things still look a little dark, but while the Exposure slider does a good job of lightening shadows, midtones and highlights, we don't want to make the highlights too bright, so we opt instead for a small increase in Brightness which has slightly less effect on the brightest highlights.

Curves dialog

Use Curves to localise changes

The CS2 version of Adobe Camera Raw contains a Curves dialog, which works on much the same principles as Photoshop Curves. While it's perfectly possible to make your Brightness, Exposure, Shadow and Contrast adjustments here, it's intended and far better use is as something to make tweaks with after you've done your heavy lifting in the Adjust tab. Raw data is linear, which without going into the boring stuff, means that Curves doesn't behave in quite the same way as you might expect, which is why it's better to use the tools specifically designed for linear data such as Exposure and the rest. What Curves is great for, is making small changes to specific areas – lightening a specific area of the Shadows, for example, rather than Shadows as a whole. The default is set to Medium Contrast – changing it to Linear can sometimes help rescue clipped detail with very high contrast images.

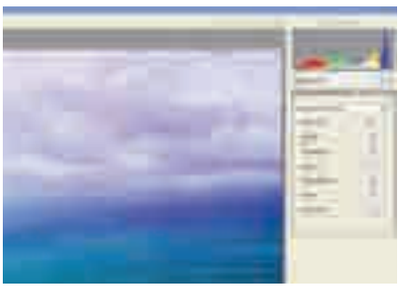
Detail and sharpening

Correct softness with capture sharpening

The Detail tab handles sharpening and noise reduction. Digital cameras naturally soften images, so sharpening is always necessary to bring them up to scratch. Zoom in to check the effect the sharpening has, but remember that inkjet printers soften detail even more, so you may need to sharpen further later in Photoshop. Photoshop also gives you the advantage of using edge sharpening techniques to avoid worsening any grain or noise. A setting of around 50 is a good starting point for capture sharpening. You can also set Sharpening to Preview Only in the Settings Preferences so you can see how your image will look sharpened, but no sharpening will be applied to the image when it's actually processed to be opened or saved.

07 Saturation boost We've gone for that very rich, high contrast look, so we enhance it further by whacking Saturation up to +100, which in this instance doesn't produce too severe an effect. This has actually clipped our shadows, so we move the Shadows slider back a little to accommodate the Saturation changes.

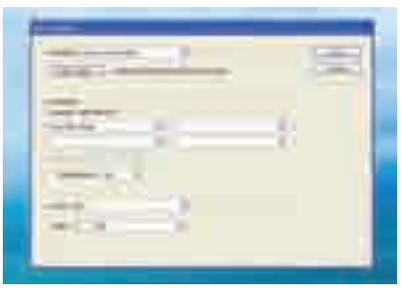
08 Creative white balance We now drop Temperature a touch to bring out the blues a little more. And we do something we wouldn't normally do, which is to produce a deliberate cast with the Tint slider. We add Green and so reduce Magenta, giving the blues a more turquoise feel.



09 Creative calibration Now for some really creative fun. We switch to the Calibrate tab and start fiddling with the Hue and Saturation sliders. Calibrate is actually meant for tweaking the colour of camera profiles, but we play about with it to creative effect to add a little purple to the sky.

10 Noise problems We change our minds with Calibrate again to finish. Our hard Saturation increases in Calibrate have showed up some noise in our image, so we switch to the Detail tab to try and reduce it. Even at full setting (inadvisable) the problem isn't reduced, so we go back to the defaults.

11 Noise solution We want to reproduce our image quite big, so the noise is a problem. We cut our losses and reset the Calibrate sliders to 0, reducing the noise dramatically. The colour isn't actually affected too much once we add a little more Green in Tint.



12 Output choices There's no lens problems like vignetting to remove, so we don't need this tab. We check the Highlight and Shadows box to take one last look for clipping, set the Workflow options then click Save because we've no further Photoshop changes. We save as a TIFF, not a JPEG.

Detail and noise

Reduce colour and luminance noise

Noise is generally the product of high ISO settings, underexposure, poor camera design or all three. It comes in two flavours: luminance noise is the monochromatic type that appears almost like traditional film grain – light and dark mottled areas; colour noise manifests itself as typically bigger blotches of false colour. Colour noise is relatively easy to remove, and the default ACR setting of 25 is normally enough to shift most – going further tends to have little effect. Luminance noise is much harder to remove, and the Luminance Smoothing slider designed to remove it will also soften overall detail so needs to be used sparingly.

The Lens tab

Remove vignetting and chromatic aberration

Chromatic aberration is a lens defect that manifests as colour fringing – false colour 'fringes' along high-contrast edges. These can be a multitude of colours – mostly purple, but can be red, cyan, blue or yellow. It's most common at wide-angle focal lengths, and more common with wide-angle zooms than fixed focal length wide-angle lenses. You may need to tweak both sliders to reduce the effect – purple fringing usually needs two slider alterations to be reduced or removed. Vignetting is the term given to darkening in the corners of a frame and, while it is a lens defect, it's thought to be more pronounced with digicam sensor technology, and more so with cameras using 'full-frame' 35mm sensors. It tends to be prominent with wide-angle lens set at wide apertures. Vignetting Amount controls the amount of lightening/darkening applied, and Vignetting Midpoint the area it's applied to.

Paint like Georgia O'Keefe

Hailed by many as the most famous American female artist, Georgia O'Keefe is best known for her oils of colourful, sensual flowers

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- BRUSHES
- FILTERS
- APPLYING COLOUR
- OIL EFFECTS

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Two hours

YOUR EXPERT
Hannah Gal

ON THE CD
poppy images

Georgia O'Keefe loved flowers. Her mission as an artist was to share this love with the world. O'Keefe aspired to make others appreciate the beauty in a flower as she saw it. "I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers," she said, and went on to paint huge renditions of magnificent plants, capturing the hearts of many around the world.

A closer look at some of her works shows visible paint strokes and smudging/blurring effects. Unlike Van Gogh's bold impasto, these are flat and slightly smeared.

The piece at hand here is a relatively simple one to create. There's a small number of layers to handle and the process is mostly about gradual build-up of colour.

We will start by turning the flower into a black and white sketch. We'll colour in the flower and apply paint in the style of O'Keefe, before adding green leaves and a second flower for effect.

The final steps in our creation are all about applying the Paint Daubs filter and adding canvas texture to the surface.

It is possible to work directly on a colour photo without first converting to a sketch. Working with a sketch however, better imitates an artist's creative process and serves as a useful guide when applying paint.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7 AND ABOVE, PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3 AND ABOVE

Tool School

Embossed brush strokes

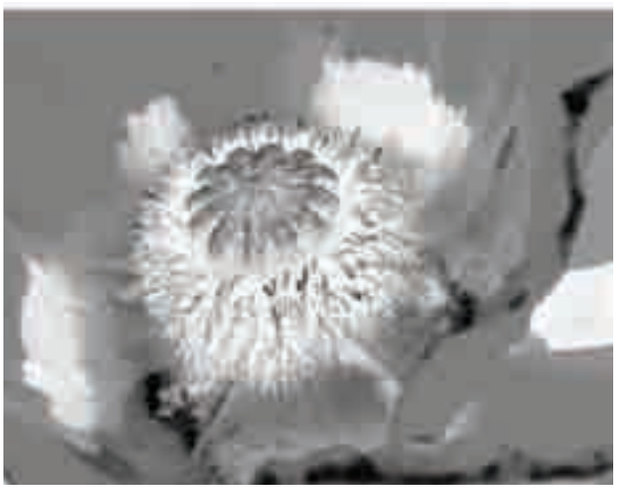
Adding a third effect to the brush strokes will enhance the piece and make it look more like a real oil painting. O'Keefe's application is quite smooth, so this effect should be subtle – nothing like Van Gogh's bold impasto. To bring the strokes 'out of the canvas', select the area you wish to apply the effect to and go to Filter>Render>LIghting Effects. Choose Directional as the Light type. Next, adjust the settings to reach the depth, exposure and height level that you are after, using the Preview window as a guide.

PREP THE PHOTO

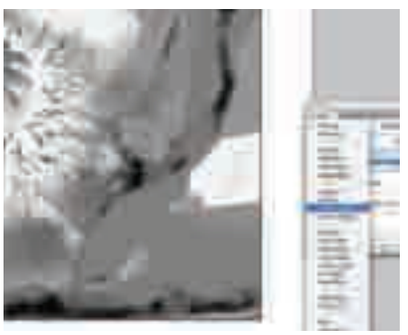
The first steps to painting

01 Big orange flower Create your main image file size 380mm wide by 290mm high. Copy the 'poppy1.jpg' file from the disc into the main file, as a separate layer. Name it 'OrangeFlower'. Go to Edit>Transform to resize it. Be sure to press the Shift key while sizing the flower. It should take roughly two thirds of the image and be placed right at the centre.

02 Turn into a sketch We start by turning our colour photo into a black-and-white sketch. Go to Layer>New>Layer via Copy to make a copy of the OrangeFlower layer. You will now have the background layer, the original OrangeFlower layer and also OrangeFlower Copy. Place it below OrangeFlower.

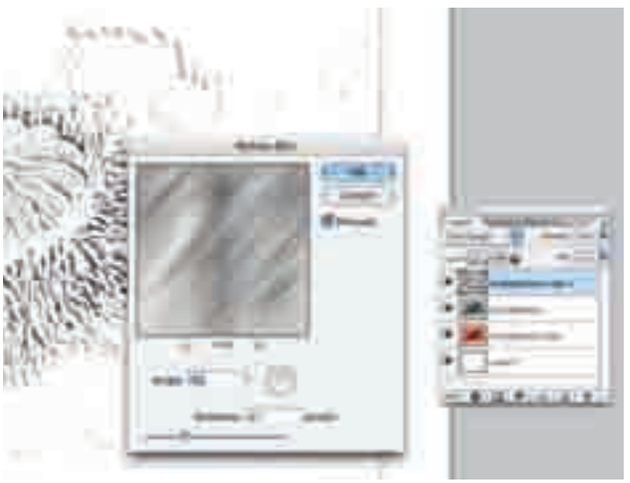


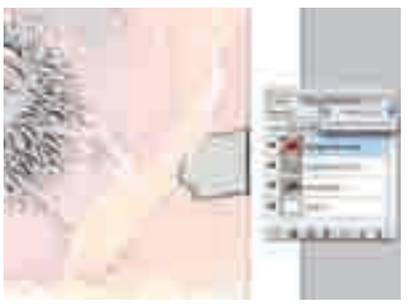
03 Desaturate and Invert Select the OrangeFlower layer and go to Image>Adjustments>Desaturate. Your colour picture is now a black-and-white photo. Go to Layer>New>Layer via Copy to make another copy. You now have two copies of the Orange Flower. Drag Copy2 to the top of your Layers palette and go to Image>Adjustments>Invert. Your photo now looks like a negative.



04 Color Dodge In the Layers palette, change Copy2's blend mode to Color Dodge. The picture should now be completely, or near completely white. You need not worry – this is merely a preparation for the next, revealing step.

05 Motion Blur With the top layer still selected, go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Set Angle to 45 and Distance to 57. You could also try Gaussian Blur or Radial Blur. You need to adjust the settings until you reach the right level of drawing. Take it too far and you will end up with a black-and-white photo once again.



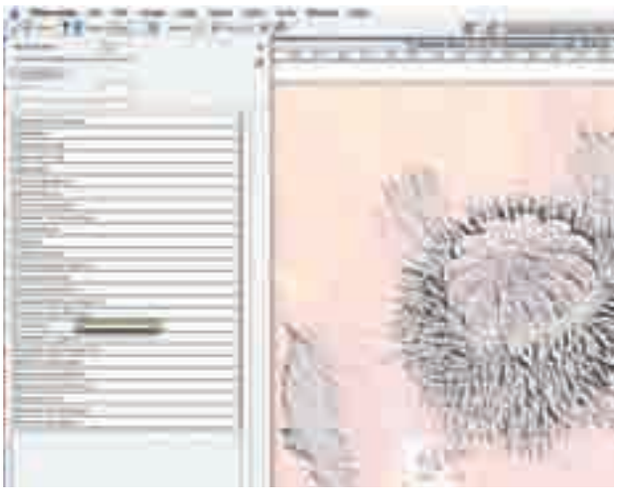


06 Prepare to paint In the Layers palette drag the colourful OrangeFlower Copy layer to the very top. Now pull the Opacity slider down to between 25 and 15% so it blends with the sketch underneath. You should have a faint colourful image with nice drawn edges all round.

PAINT THE POPPY!

Getting oils onto paper

07 **Merge Visible** Make sure the three OrangeFlower layers are visible, go to the little triangle at the top right of the Layers palette and choose Merge Visible. Now that our underlying drawing is created, we no longer need to keep all three in place.

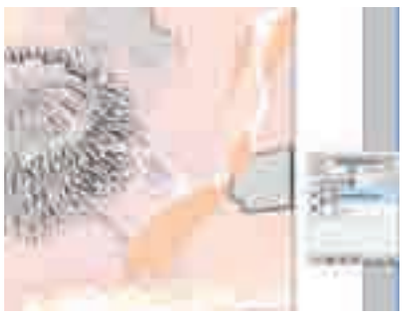


08 **Oil Brush** We are ready to start applying paint to the flower. This is a guiding stage where we set the grounds for intense painting later on. Choose the Brush tool from the Tools palette and open the Brushes palette. Click on the little triangle, top right of the palette to select Wet Media Brushes. Here, select the Oil Medium Brush Wet Edges brush, set to 20% opacity.

Tool School

Alternative

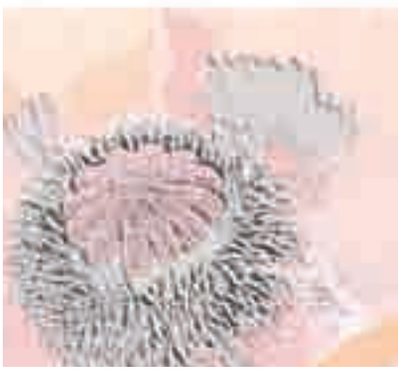
The same result can be achieved with the Art History brush. Click the triangle upper right corner of the History palette, and hit New Snapshot. In the Layers palette create a new layer. Fill with 100% white. In the History palette, click the square left of the snapshot title, click the new layer and pick a paint style in the Options bar.



09 **Faint orange** Following the faint colour underneath, start by applying paint to the lightest area of the image. You do not need to be very accurate at this stage. Be sure to adjust the opacity to slightly higher and lower, according to need. Cover areas loosely and adjust the size of your brush as you go along.

10 **Clear borders** Choose the Eraser tool and set to full opacity. Set a small to medium-sized brush and erase the square lines surrounding the image. This is the rectangle line that remained from the original image we copied and pasted in step one.

11 **Complete flowers** Before we carry on with colouring the flower, we need to complete the shape of the flower. Parts of the petals are missing and need to be drawn in. Choose any small brush, light orange colour and draw the contour of the petals. This completes the shape of the flower and will be coloured later on.



12 **Green leaves** Merge Visible, Copy/Paste leaves from 'poppy2.jpg' from the CD and scale to size. Flip and place left of the image. Place the GreenLeaves layer under the flower and erase to fit the petals' shape. Apply the Paint Daubs filter to the GreenLeaves layer, with Brush Type of Simple, Brush Size of 6 and Sharpness of 3.

13 **Colour build-up** Staying with the Oil Medium Brush Wet Edges brush, increase the opacity to between 30 and 50% (depending how confident you feel) and apply to the canvas. You are now applying paint over the first faint layer to be applied in the previous step. Follow the shadows and highlights areas underneath, and allow what is already there in the photo to guide you.

A bit of history

The Georgia O'Keefe story

Throughout her life, O'Keefe established herself as a pioneering modernist. In her native Wisconsin she started working in watercolour, but a shift to New York in the mid-1920s also signalled the move to oils.

An annual exhibition in the big city spread the word and secured commercial success. In 1928, six of her calla lily paintings sold for US$25,000, which was at the time the largest sum ever paid for a group of paintings by a living American artist.

Mew Mexico later proved a source of inspiration, with the discovery of the new subjects of animal bones and unique Mexican landscapes. Many of these are among her most famous works.

The emphasis throughout O'Keefe's work, be it flowers, bones or landscapes, is on simplistic, aesthetic rendition. From callas to petunias, irises to roses, her presentation is pleasing. With her strong sense of aesthetics, she still ensured her unique viewpoint was never lost.

Tool School

Dodge, Burn and Erase

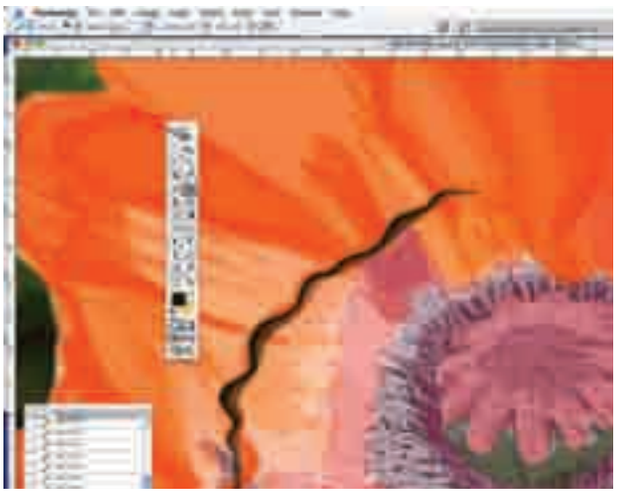
Besides a multitude of brushes, Photoshop offers several effective tools. The many creative filters are one such example. Select a small area of the image and explore what's on offer. These helpers can enhance an image with great artistic effects. You can also use the Dodge, Burn and Eraser tools in the painting process. A low opacity Burn for example, can darken an area, while Dodge will 'lift' it with highlights. A good example for the Burn use is the dark centre of the flower, while Dodge can be used to brighten up the flower edges.

MORE STROKES EQUALS MORE EFFECT

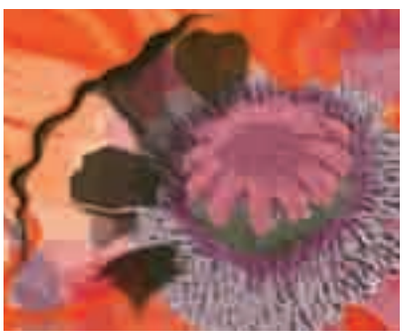
Add colours with glee

14 More colour As you progress, your confidence grows. You can apply paint more freely, covering greater areas of the flower. There is no system or order here – simply apply to the area that most appeals and move on. Adjust opacity and brush size as needed.

15 Depth Use the original photo to follow folds and areas of greater depth. Use a slightly darker shade and draw the shape of the fold/darker area. Fill the area entirely. Now choose a slightly darker shade via the Color palette and colour in the darker edges. The end of this step should see most of the flower covered in colour, with just a few areas remaining at low opacity.



16 Black colours The black areas are central to the image. Choose a black colour from the Color Palette and set opacity to 50% before drawing a wavy line. Increase the opacity and choose a thicker brush to fill in the immediate area, as seen here.



17 More black Use a low opacity (30-40%) black colour to draw in black shapes around the centre. Draw these shapes freely and fill them in with the same low opacity brush. This will add interest to the flower and draw the eye to the centre of it.

18 More definition Stay with the black colour, and use at full opacity to go over the previously created black areas. Start colouring the edges and move towards the centre of the black shape.

19 Flower centre The purple centre of the flower is too big and needs to be reduced in size. There are several ways to do this. With a Selection tool, select the area and use the Transform tool, while pressing Shift, to reduce the size. Fill in the newly created white areas in black.

20 Dark background Create a new layer and name it 'Dark Background'. Choose a shade of orange that's darker than all you have used so far. Fill in the area to the right of the flower to create the dark background. You can apply with a brush or fill in. Leave a few slightly lighter areas for interest. Go to Levels, pull the middle slider to 0.80 for an even darker shade.

NEXT ISSUE | SEE WHICH FAMOUS PAINTER WE CHOOSE TO RE-CREATE!

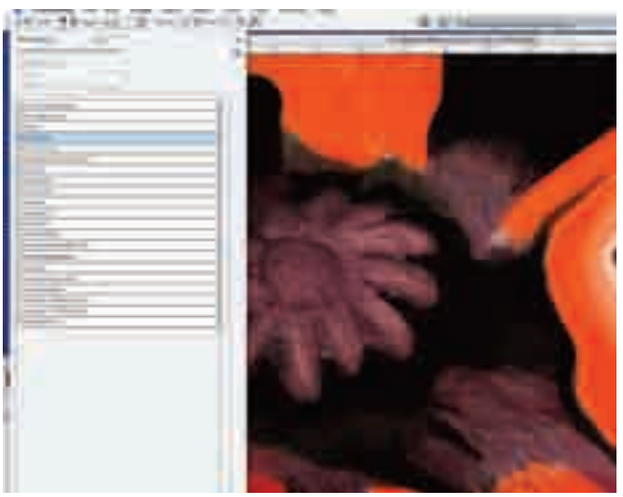
ADD AN EXTRA FLOWER

Smudge and conquer

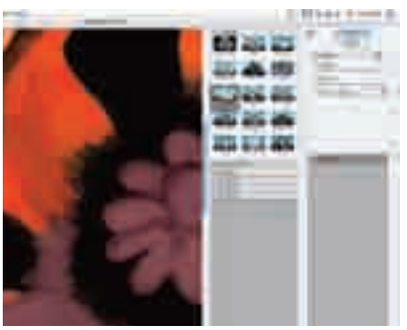
21 Copy the flower centre Cover more of the flower with full opacity orange colour. In the main flower image, select the right half of the centre area. Copy and paste it as a separate layer. Name the new layer 'FlowerCopy'. Place it to the right of the main flower and use the Eraser to shape it so it hides behind the older flower. Use the Transform tool to increase its size.

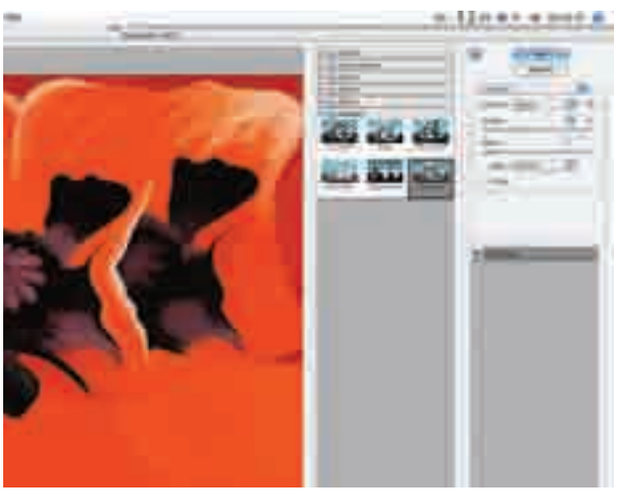
22 Saturate and smudge Select the GreenLeaves layer and go to Image> Adjustments>Hue/ Saturation. Click on the Colorize option bottom right of the palette, pull the Hue slider to 0, Saturation to 65 and Lightness to -8. The leaves should be dark purple-red. Flatten the image. Choose the Smudge tool, set Strength to 80% and smudge edges of the centre purple of the main flower.

23 Soft Oil Pastel In the Brushes palette, click the little triangle on the top right and select the Dry Media Brushes. Select the Soft Oil Pastel brush, choose low opacity white and smooth the areas at the edges of the flower. Now choose orange and go over orange-coloured areas to smooth them and so on. This is a step to finalise the colouring process.



24 Paint Daubs Go to Filter> Artistic>Paint Daubs. Try Brush Type Simple, Brush Size 6 and Sharpness 3 for a painterly effect. It's best to experiment to reach the level and kind of filter you like.

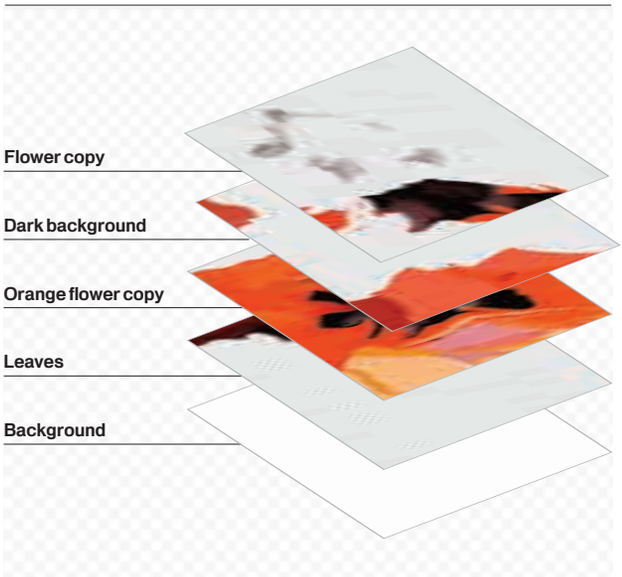




25 Texture It's time to apply the canvas texture to the final image. You could go to Filters>Artistic> Rough Pastels and choose the Canvas texture, but we chose to go for Filter> Texture>Texturizer for the effect. To save time, choose a small area first and experiment with Relief and Scaling levels.

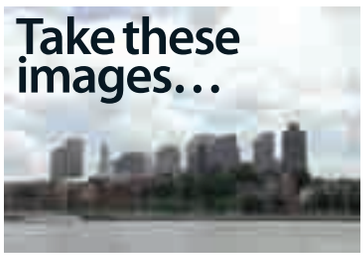
Painting flowers

How our O'Keefe masterpiece grew



Merge photos for better exposure

Learn how to fake a neutral density graduated filter in Photoshop by merging two bracketed photos



OVEREXPOSED

UNDEREXPOSED

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Approximately 15 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Rob Anselmi

ON THE CD
Over and underexposed files

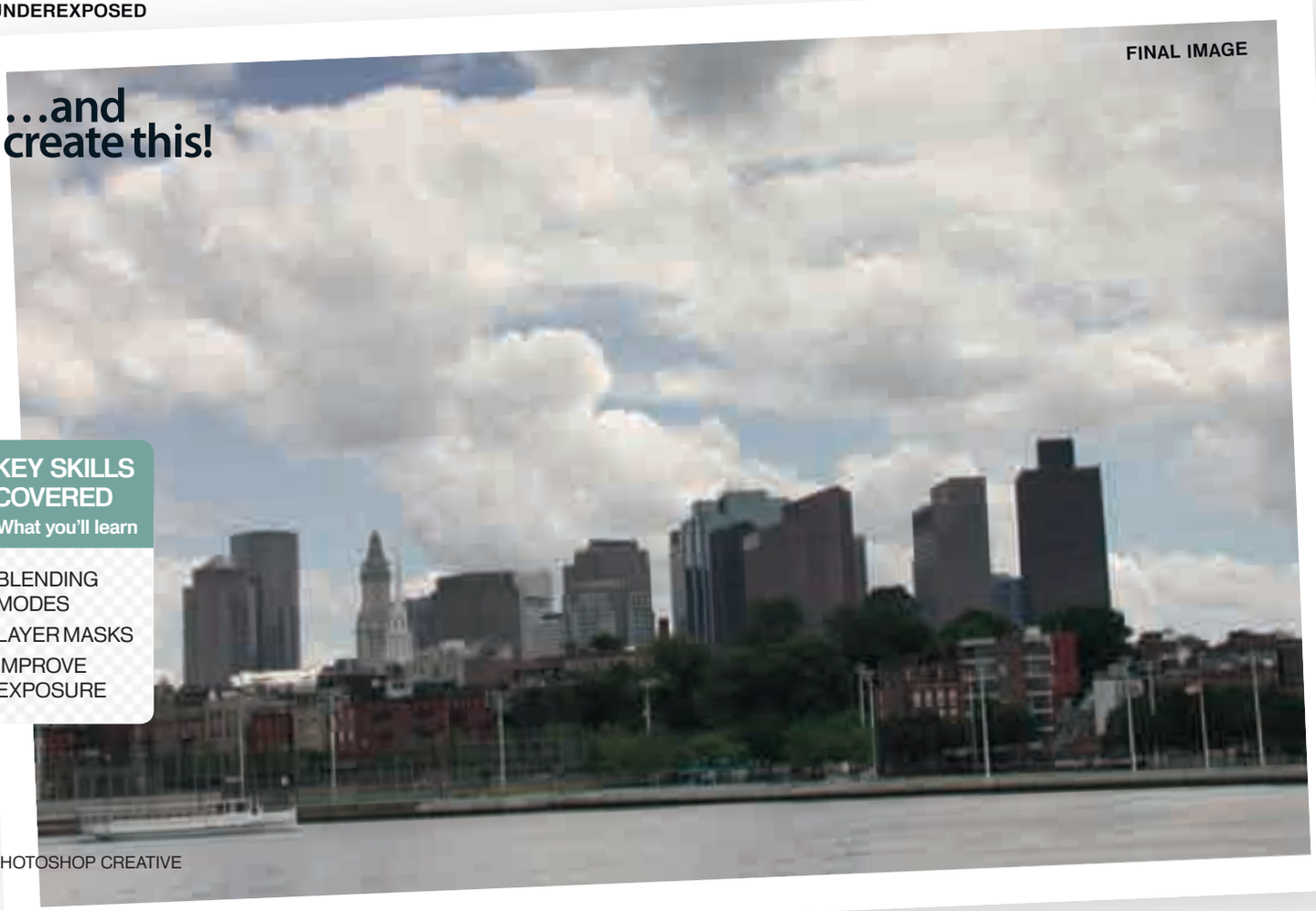
In this article we're going to explore a very simple method of balancing out the exposure between two parts of an image by merging two bracketed photos, and by doing so compensate for a real-world neutral density graduated filter. CS2 users have an automated way of doing this in the shape of the Merge to HDR command (File>Automate>Merge to HDR). But where the Merge to HDR can be finicky about what photos you use and is sometimes a bit hard to handle on the output end, this process is much easier and has the advantage of being able to run in almost any version of Photoshop.

The problem with trying to simulate a neutral density graduated filter in Photoshop is that once you have a blown-out sky, there is very little that will bring back the tone of the image. Once your image is overexposed it becomes useless, and no amount of Photoshop magic can bring it back.

For example, take an image of an overexposed sky and try adding a grey gradient over the sky area in a new layer. Change the layer to 'Overlay' and watch what happens. Photoshop actually treats the grey as a colour within the image, and this does nothing to enhance your photo. You end up with a washed-out muddy mess that's worse than your original.

So how do you correct this kind of image? As with any good photo, the trick is to step back to the point before you took the image. If you bracket your exposure, you can compensate for any graduated neutral density filter inside Photoshop without having to resort to all those expensive filters.

…and create this!



FINAL IMAGE

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

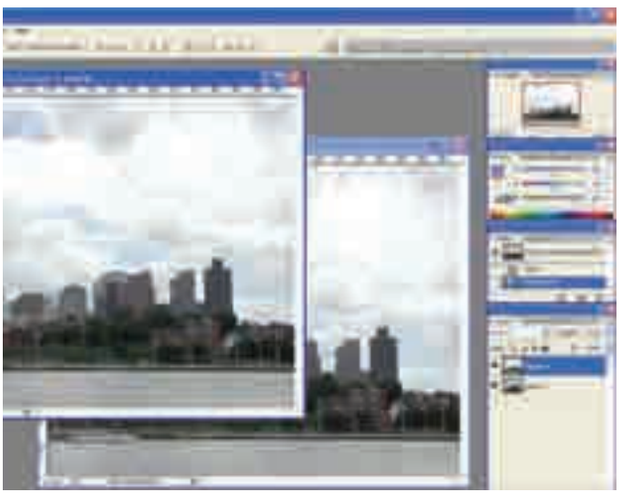
BLENDING MODES
LAYER MASKS
IMPROVE EXPOSURE

GET MAXIMUM EXPOSURE

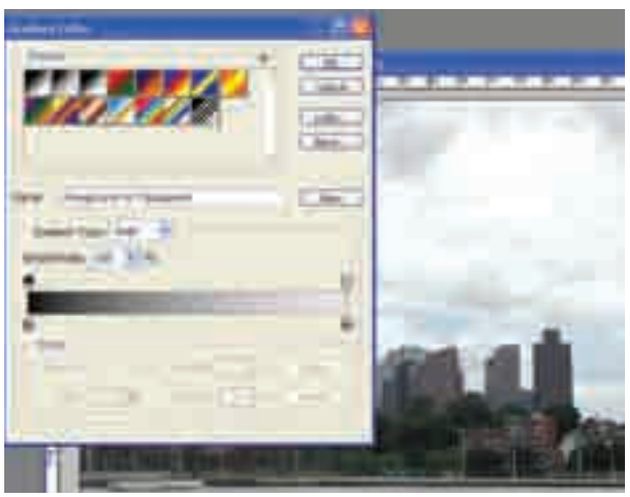
From dodgy to delightful

01 **Taking your photos** Before starting out in Photoshop, get out your tripod, set your camera to Manual and take two exposures of the exact same image – about a half to one stop apart. The idea is to correct for a drastic difference in exposure. If unsure, take four or five different exposures of the same shot or use the supplied images on the disc.

02 **Consolidate both exposures** Open the two photos in Photoshop, and pick the Move tool. Hold Shift down and drag the lighter (overexposed) image into the darker (underexposed) image window. The lighter image is placed as a layer on the darker one. By holding Shift, the relative location of the image is maintained when placed in the other image window.

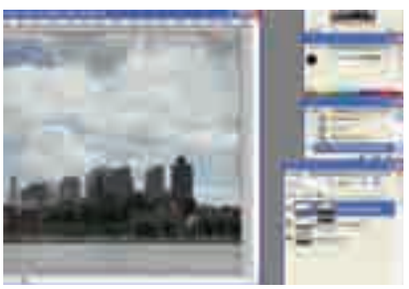


03 **Create a layer mask** Close the overexposed image, as it's not needed any more. In the consolidated document, click the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers palette to create a layer mask on the overexposed layer. Rename the two layers here so you can see which layer is which.



04 **Add a black to transparent gradient** With the layer mask selected and your foreground colour set to Black, click on the Gradient tool in the Toolbox. Click the Gradient swatch in the Options bar to open the Gradient Editor dialog, and select the Foreground to Transparent gradient. Now click OK to close the dialog.

05 **Draw your gradient into the mask** Holding your Shift key down, draw a gradient from the top of the image to the bottom of the image. This has the same effect as applying a neutral density graduated filter to the front of your lens.



06 **Add a bit more pop to the image** Create a duplicate of the top layer, mask and all, by dragging the top layer over the Create a New Layer button on the Layers palette. Select the layer mask and press the Ctrl/Cmd+I keyboard combination. This inverts your layer mask. Then change the layer's blend mode to Multiply and Opacity to 50%.

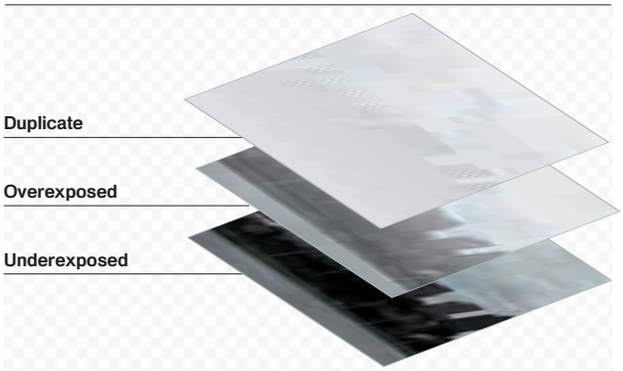
Resources

Real-world neutral density graduated filters

Neutral density graduated filters transition from grey to transparent. When placed over the camera lens, they help equilibrate the exposure of a scene, eg with an image of a skyline on a bright sunny day you'll almost always end up with a blown-out sky and a properly exposed foreground. Expose for the sky, and you end up with an underexposed (darkened) foreground. Add the neutral density graduated filter and the grey half of the filter blocks out sun coming from the sky, which evens out exposure between both parts of the image. As the filter is partially grey, it doesn't affect image colour, making it a neutral filter.

The layer structure

Behind the camera



KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

PEN TOOL
SMUDGE TOOL
CLOUDS FILTER
BLUR FILTER
LAYER MASKS

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
One hour

YOUR EXPERT
Simon Rudd

ON THE CD
Starter files

Create a living nebula

They say space is the final frontier, but unlike the voyages of the Starship Enterprise we're going to make space creatures rather than find them

Personally we've always enjoyed science fiction – we like the thought of creatures living on different planets and planes of existence.

One of the things we love about sci-fi is that you're only limited by your own imagination, so no one can say what an alien would look like or how it would behave.

In this tutorial you will learn to create a living nebula, a creature living in the depth of space, spending its days sailing through the cosmos ever closer to entropy (or so our imaginations tell us).

The tools you will learn to use in this tutorial are some of our favourites: the invaluable Pen tool, the spectacular Smudge tool, and also the ever-useful Clouds and Blur filters. Plus you will get to grips with Photoshop's powerful layers and layer masks.

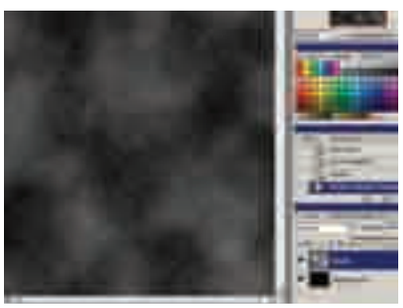
In this tutorial we'll combine a couple of pictures to achieve the effect we want. Both images are on the disc, but please feel free to use your own figure or starfield.

While the end result is a delight in its own right, you can also use this technique to create your own birthday cards or maybe an invitation to a theme party. It would also make a stunning background image for a DVD menu or web page.

Alternatively, if you have copies of issues five and six, you could always use the Space tutorials to set a scene and then add a figure in the background…

ONE SMALL STEP…
Assemble the parts

01 Space age We start off this project by opening the file 'Starfield.jpg' from the CD. This is a 1024x768-pixel document with a basic starfield; feel free to make your own if you wish.



02 Clouds Next, we add a bit of texture to the starfield. First press 'D' on your keyboard to reset the colours to black and white, and add a new layer (Layer>New>New). Name it 'Clouds'. We then add some clouds from the Filter menu (Filter>Render>Clouds). Set the blending mode to Screen and reduce the opacity to 40%.

03 Give it some body With the starfield looking lovely, it's time to add our nebula figure. Load the file 'silhouette.jpg' from the CD. We now need to do some work to make him fit in with the scene.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7 AND ABOVE

Simon Rudd

You may recognise Simon from issue 11's Reader's Profile. We were so impressed by his Nebula image that we got him to write you all a tutorial on how he did it! Be sure to let us know how you got on with it and share your space creations.

Tip

More clouds

If you feel your picture is missing something when you've finished it, try adding some difference clouds. Make a new layer called 'Difference Clouds' and select a very pale blue for the foreground and black for the background from the Color Swatch. Fill the new layer with clouds followed by difference clouds; repeat the Difference Clouds filter until you're happy with the outcome. Change the blending mode to Screen and lower the opacity. Mask out any parts of the layer that don't fit.

Web Resources

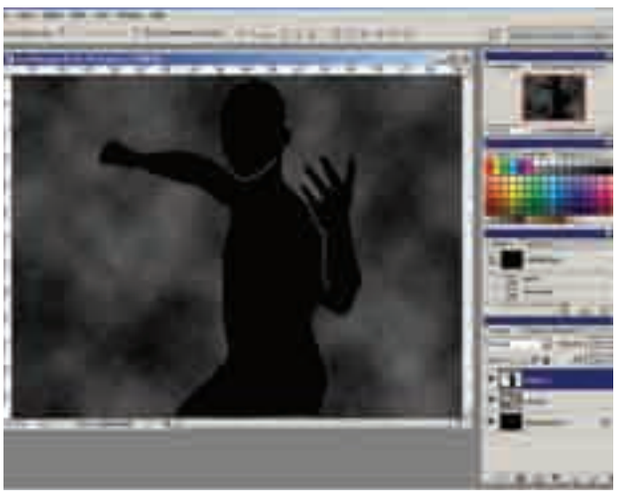
Starfields

There are many great tutorials on the web that will help you create some very cool space scenes. One of the best resources we found is pixel2life.com (**www.pixel2life.com/tutorials/Adobe_Photoshop/All/** and search for stars), but don't take these tutorials as gospel – play with them and see what you can come up with.

GET THINGS IN PLACE

Making a nebula out of a man

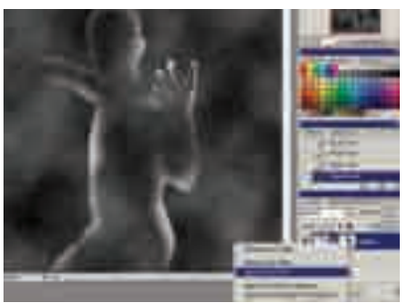
04 Extract the model The stock has a white background, so it's very easy for us to extract the model from its surroundings. Select the Magic Wand tool, setting Tolerance to 32 and click on the white background, then inverse the selection by going to Select>Inverse.



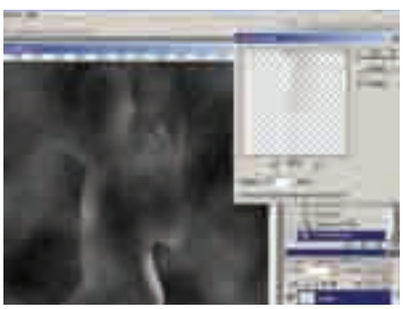
05 Copy and paste Now copy the model (Edit>Copy) and place (Edit>Paste) it on the starfield document; rename the layer 'Model'. If the new layer is larger than the starfield, resize it using Free Transform (Edit>Free Transform). When resizing it, remember to hold down the Shift key to keep the aspect ratio correct.

06 Body building Now with all your hard work gone into getting the model onto the starfield, we're going to hide him – so click the eye next to the thumbnail in the Layer window. We now begin to build up the body. Make a new layer (Layer>New>New) and name it 'Outline'. Ctrl/Cmd-click the Model layer thumbnail in order to select its outline.

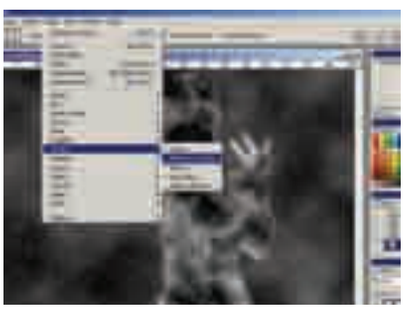
07 Clouds-r-us First we want to set the colours to the default, so press 'D' on your keyboard. Then, making sure you're on the Outline layer you just created, go to Filter>Render>Clouds. This should fill your selection with a random cloud texture. Next, lose the selection by going to Select>Deselect.



08 Give him space Now comes the fun stuff. Add a layer mask to Outline (Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All), and with a large soft-edged brush of about 100 pixels, begin to mask everything but a border. When happy, right/Ctrl-click the mask and hit Apply Mask. This removes the mask and contents from the layer.



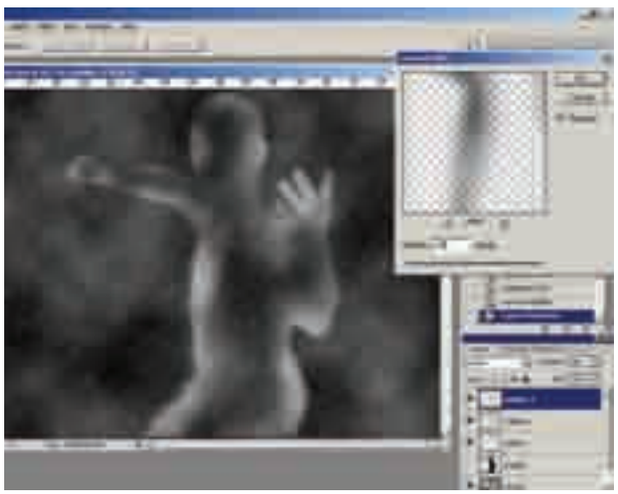
09 Blur the boundaries Select the outline as in step six and blur the image – Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur 20 pixels, to soften it up a bit. Deselect the Outline layer. This is where we get creative: select the Smudge tool with a brush size of 60 and strength of 50, and begin to smudge the outline. Now set the Opacity to 40%.



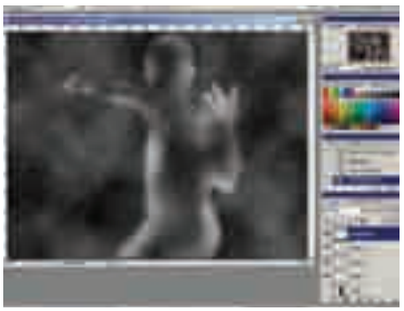
10 Outline: the revenge We're now going to develop the outline a bit more. Make a new layer and name it 'Outline 2', then select the outline as we did before and fill it with clouds. Now we need to fill it with Difference Clouds (Filter>Render>Difference Clouds). Repeat the Difference Clouds filter three times.

11 More borders As in step eight, we're going to be removing the inside of the model and just leaving the border. Add a layer mask and begin to brush away the unwanted parts, leaving a slightly larger border. As before, apply the mask. Now change the blending mode to Screen and the Opacity to 40%.

BLUR FEST
Sitting the figure in the sky



12 No more borders The final step for the borders is an easy one; just duplicate the Outline 2 layer by selecting it and pressing Ctrl/Cmd+J. Rename this layer 'Outline 3' (that was a surprise, huh). Now we blur it – Filter> Blur>Gaussian Blur 10 pixels – and change the blending mode to Screen with an Opacity of 50%.

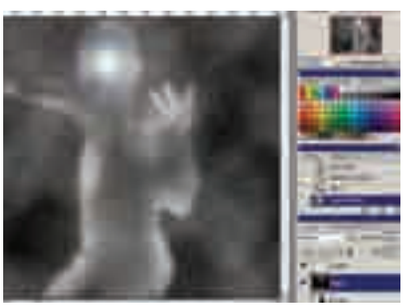


13 Inside Blur We've now got the borders all built up; feel free to go back and smudge outlines 1, 2 or 3 as much as you wish. The insides of the nebula are a bit lacking, so let's fill them up. Add a new layer called 'Inside Blur', and Ctrl-click the Model layer thumbnail to bring up the marching ants.

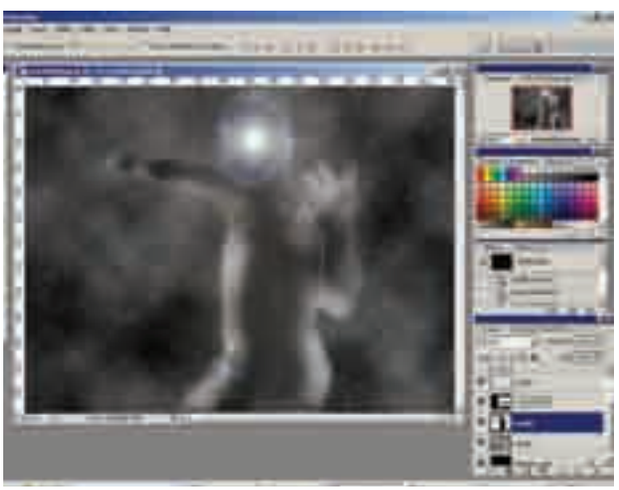
14 Blur baby, blur! Let's use our old friend Clouds again – Filter>Render> Clouds, followed by deselecting the border (Select>Deselect). To give it a misty feel we blur it – Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur 40 pixels, finally set the blending mode to Screen and the Opacity to between 30% and 50%

15 A bit of flare There's a lot of controversy about the use of the Lens Flare filter due to its massive overuse, but we're going to use it here. Add a new layer, call it 'Flare' and fill it with black (Shift+F5). Now add the Lens Flare by going to Filter>Render>Lens Flare>, using the setting 105mm Prime 80% brightness.

16 Kind of magic Position the Lens Flare roughly where the head would be and press the OK button to accept the filter. So now the screen is all black with a Lens Flare, right? Wrong – we now change the blending mode to Screen, and is if by magic the document is no longer black.



17 What a drag Reposition the Flare so it's in the middle of the head, using the Move tool. It might now look slightly too bright. We could just change the opacity, but instead we are going to drag the Flare layer in the Layers palette to near the bottom of the stack just above the Model layer.



18 Main feature We've nearly reached the end of out little project. So far we should have the outline and body of our nebula, but he doesn't have any features – so we'll now go to our Model layer and click the eye next to it to unhide it.

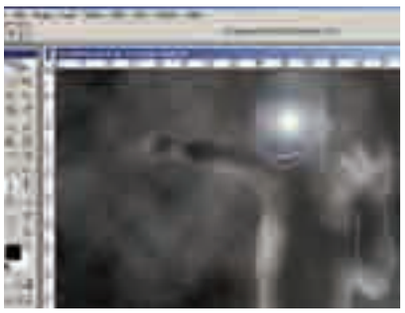
Tip

Planets

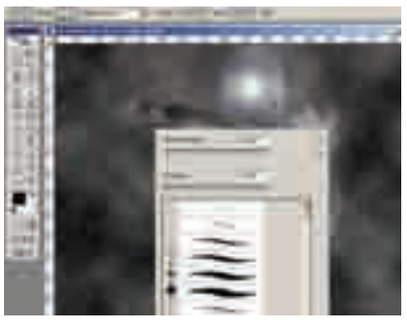
A planet added to the background of your picture may bring another layer of realism and beauty to your artwork. Planets are very easy to make. Find a good rock texture, play with the Elliptical Marquee tool and the Spherize filter (Filter > Distort > Spherize) to create easy and nice-looking planets. Once again, use pixel2life.com to find useful tutorials if you're in need of inspiration. Don't be afraid to experiment – just remember to use layers so if things do go wrong you can just delete them.

FINISHING TOUCHES
No sharp edges, thank you

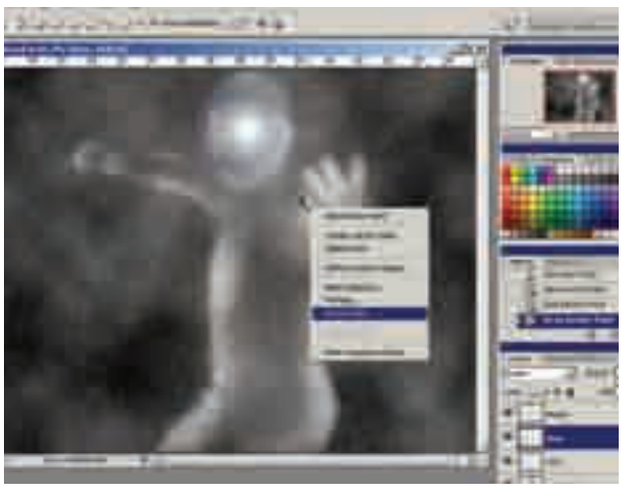
19 Model times On the Model layer we have drawn some white lines to represent his chin and arm; we are going to trace these lines as well as the fingers on a new layer using the Pen tool. Go to the top of the layer stack and create a new layer called 'Chin'.



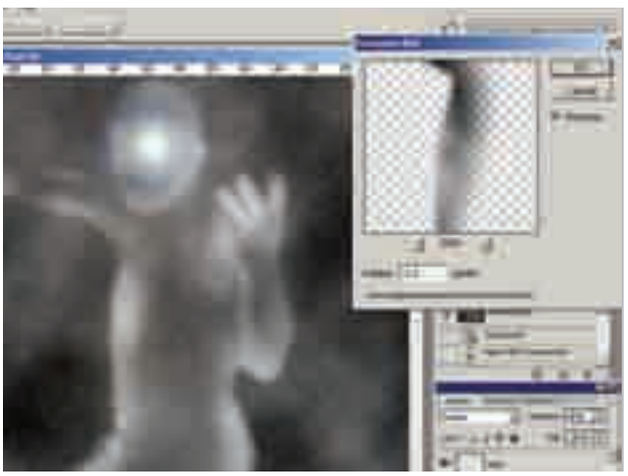
20 Trace analysis Choose the Pen tool from the Toolbox and draw a straight line connecting the two ends of the chin. Half way along the line, left click or right-click and select Add Anchor Point. Now change tools to the Direct Selection tool, making sure you choose the hollow arrow tool, not the filled one.



21 Line up When happy with the line, select the Brush and change Diameter to 10 and Hardness to 0%; make the foreground white and reselect the Pen. Right-click on the Pen line and select Stroke Path; in the drop-down list pick Brush.

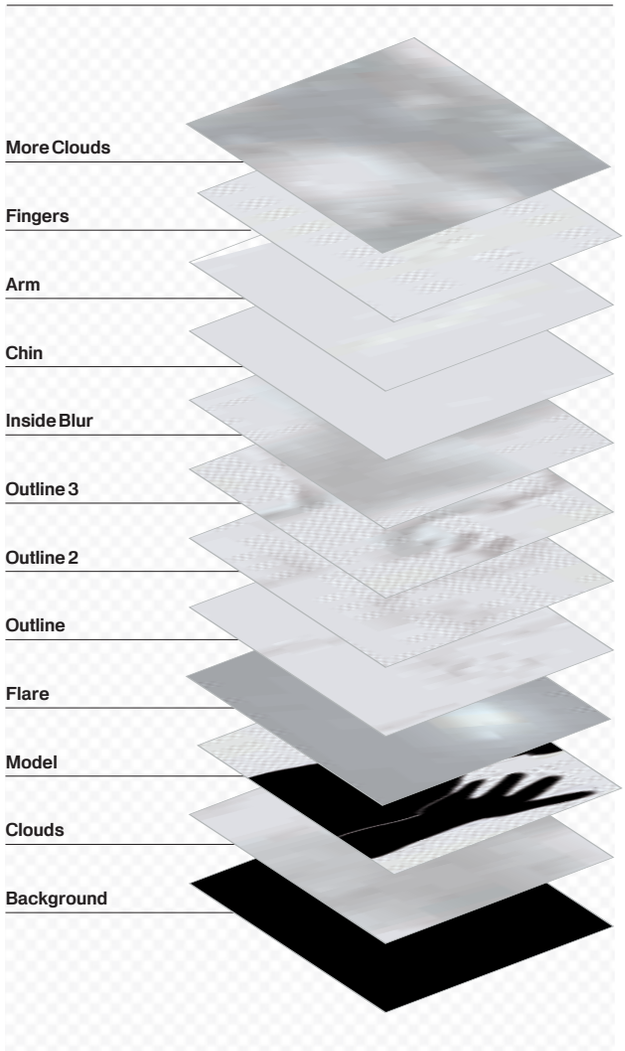


22 And repeat Blur the Chin line with a 10-pixel Gaussian Blur and set the blending mode to Screen with an Opacity of 75%. To remove the Pen line, right-click on it while the Pen tool is selected and choose Delete Path. Finally, repeat steps 19 to 22 but with the right arm and fingers.



23 Finishing touches We finish the project by adjusting the outline, outline 2 and outline 3 layers so they blend to how you want them, this can be done with blurs, smudges or changing the opacity. The choice is really up to you. We also blurred outline 2 with another 20 pixel Gaussian blur to achieve the final nebular creation.

The layer structure
A galaxy of possibilities



NEXT ISSUE | ANOTHER READER SHARES THEIR PHOTOSHOP SAVVY WITH YOU

eMag

FOCUS ON ALIGNMENT

Align and distribute

Arrange the content of your layers, and even path components, with precision

If you're producing work made up of many separate images or pieces of text on different layers, instead of guessing and lining them up by sight, it'll improve the entire composition if you use the alignment and distribution options in Photoshop.

Learning to use these buttons takes no time at all, and will make arranging your compositions quick and simple. Whether your work comprises of shapes, images or text that you need to arrange evenly and accurately, these powerful buttons can help. No longer will you have to tediously use the arrow keys when adjusting the layout of a composition!

Using either the Align or Distribute options in the Layer menu or the Options bar of the Move tool lets you apply 12 variations of arrangement to your layer content. In addition to aligning and distributing multiple layers, you can organise multiple path components such as shapes on a single layer. Groups of layers can also be aligned by selecting a group folder and choosing from the alignment or distribution options. The alignment and distribution buttons are ideally suited to projects such as portfolios and photo galleries where you'll be working with a large number of images and text that needs to be lined up quickly and with precision.

Move tool and Options bar Instead of dragging and positioning elements by sight, select the Move tool and then choose from the 12 alignment and distribution buttons in the top Options bar.

Using the Layer menu A more complicated alternative method to using the Move tool's Options bar is to select options for alignment or distribution from the Layer menu.

The Options bar

Sorting arrangement problems

Once you have the layers and content you want to align or distribute evenly organised, select the Move tool to see 12 buttons appear in the top Options bar – six for alignment and six for distribution. Hold the cursor over them to see each option. Clicking on multiple buttons allows them to be evenly spaced in many ways. For example, you can align the top edges and at the same time distribute the vertical centres. The first three alignment buttons control vertical alignment, the last three horizontal alignment. The distribution buttons will only be activated if three of more layers are selected.

The Layer menu

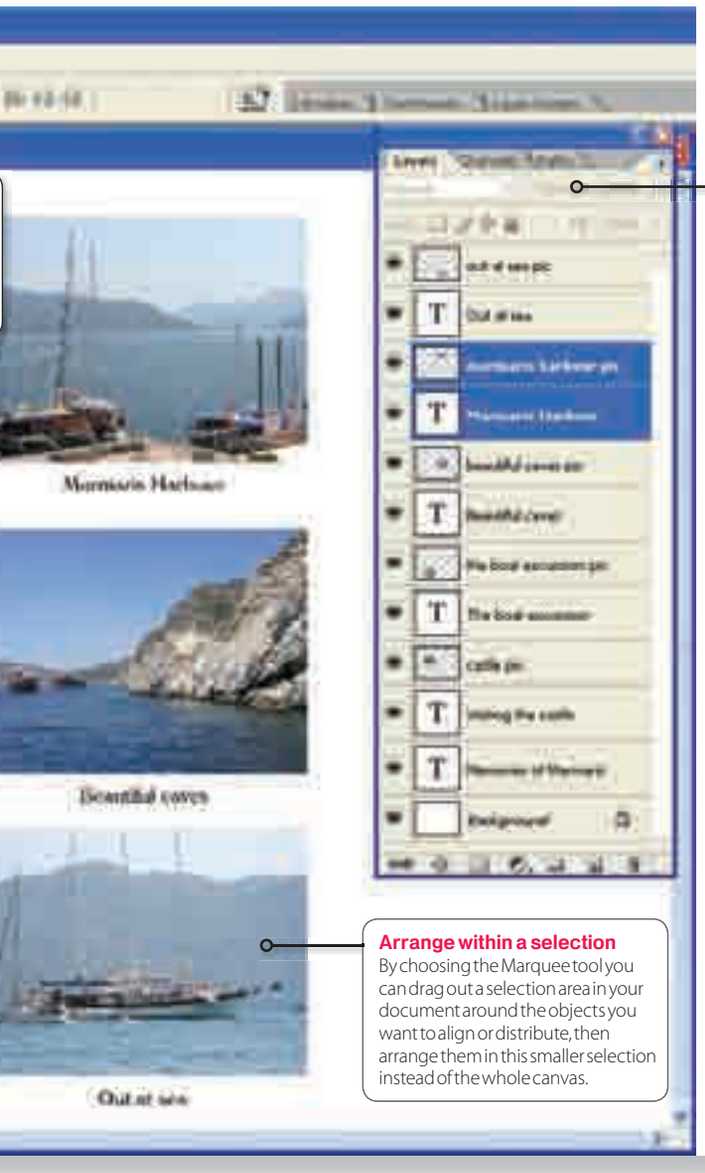
The alternative to buttons

An alternative to using the Options bar is to pick align or distribute options from the Layer menu. Make sure the layers you want to align or distribute are linked, or select multiple layers by Shift-clicking. This image shows the alignment options available when aligning the content on two layers. The image on the left has had no alignment selected. The middle shapes have been aligned horizontally via Layer>Align>Vertical Centers. The shapes in the image on the right have been aligned vertically via Layer>Align>Horizontal Centers.

Path components

Distribution and alignment

Accurate arrangement isn't limited to multiple layer content. If, say, you're creating a variety of shape paths on a layer, you have the same alignment and distribution options. To align components on the same path, pick the Path Selection tool and click each in turn while holding down Shift. With the tool selected you can now click the buttons in the top Options bar to choose your alignment or distribution options. Remember, if distributing, you must have selected three or more components.



Layers palette It's possible to align path components on one layer or select multiple layers by Shift-clicking them in the Layers palette and then choosing your desired alignment or distribution option.

Arrange within a selection By choosing the Marquee tool you can drag out a selection area in your document around the objects you want to align or distribute, then arrange them in this smaller selection instead of the whole canvas.

Tip

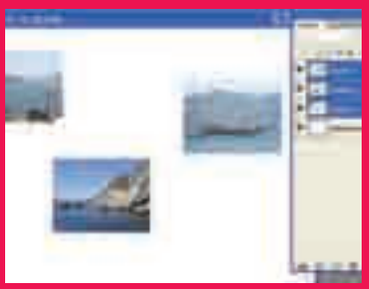
Why won't it work?

If you want to use the Distribute buttons and wonder why they can't be applied, this may be because you have not selected enough layers. For the Distribute buttons to be activated, you must first select three or more layers or path components. The Align options, however, will work when two or more layers are selected.

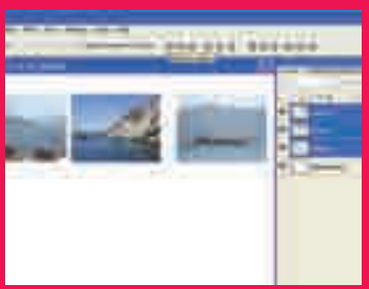
Layer alignment

Achieving accurate alignment and distribution

The Align and Distribute options enable you to evenly space path components on one layer. Here we show you how they can organise content on multiple layers



01 Organise content Click one of your document's layers in the Layers palette. To select other layers that you want to align the content of the first layer to, hold down Shift and click on them in the Layers palette.



02 Options bar The first way to select the alignment or distribution of your objects is to select the Move tool. Now the alignment and distribution buttons will become visible in the top Options bar.

03 Layer menu You can also organise the layer content by choosing Layer>Align or Layer>Distribute. Now you can select one from the set of options, including Align Top Edges, and Align Vertical Centers.

Align and distribute

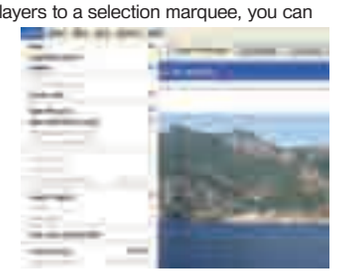
Understanding the difference

The Distribute command distributes the linked layers evenly based on the top, vertical central, bottom, left, right or horizontal central axis. Therefore, if you have multiple linked layer elements and you want them to be evenly horizontally spread, choose Layer>Distribute>Horizontal Centers. Remember, unlike the Align function, to use the Distribute feature you must make sure that you have three or more layers selected. All of the alignment and distribution options are self-explanatory. For example, Align Top Edges would align the top pixel on the selected layers to the top pixel on all selected layers or the top edge of the selection border, and would not affect their spacing – as seen in the example image.

Aligning to a selection

Protect your original image

In addition to aligning and distributing the content of layers to the canvas as a whole, you can also align and distribute content in a smaller selection. To align the content of one or more layers to a selection marquee, you can make a selection in the image, pick one or more layers from the palette then choose from the alignment options in the Layer>Align Layers To Selection menu. When using a marquee to choose the area you want your objects to align to, make sure the objects fall within the marquee first. This technique can therefore be used to align layers to a specific point in an image.



Tip

Text layers

The Paragraph window lets you align text left, right, etc as a paragraph, but the Align and Distribute buttons let you arrange multiple blocks of text on separate layers.

ur Trip to America

Design a holiday montage

We show you an innovative way to use your holiday snaps and souvenirs by incorporating them into a montage of your vacation memories

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
One hour

YOUR EXPERT
Zoe Mutter

ON THE CD
Source photos and styles

KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

- COLLAGE AND COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES
- CREATING REALISTIC OBJECTS SUCH AS PINS AND TAPE
- MAKING A POSTCARD AND STAMPS

Rather than hiding your holiday photographs away in an album, why not try a more unusual approach and create a digital pinboard of your trip? Incorporating photos, postcards, diary entries and Polaroids, it's the ideal way to capture your memories of a fantastic holiday. As an extra step, you could even add real souvenirs and receipts from the holiday to the board by scanning them in.

In this tutorial we'll show you different ways to secure your images to the digital pinboard, such as metal drawing pins, round-headed pins and tape. You've even been given a helping hand – on the disc we've provided a postcard template, handwriting font, metallic drawing-pin style and a selection of images to experiment with. If you want to see how we created the style, simply double-click on it once you've applied it to the layer and you'll see the settings in the Layer Styles window.

In addition to creating a corker of a board texture from scratch instead of photographing a real pinboard, you'll also learn how to make your images look like they are real photos placed on the board. And as if this isn't enough to get your teeth into, we even show how you can make your own postcard complete with personalised stamps, watermark and text in a handwritten style of font.

Follow our steps to begin pinning and taping this year's snaps to your digital board that you can look back on for years to come…

CORKY CREATION

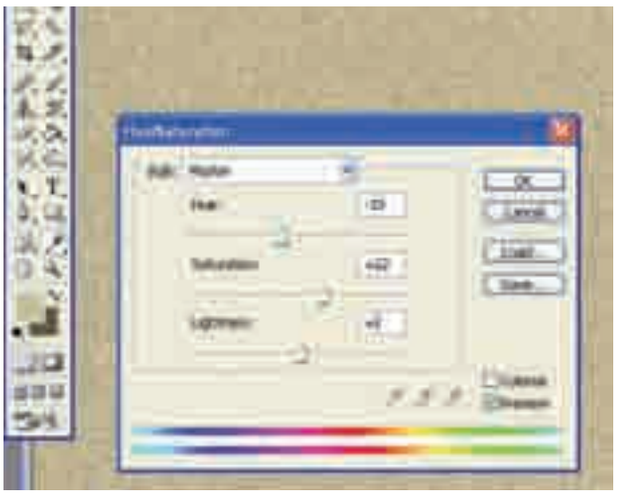
Be a pinboard wizard

Tip

Drag rather than copy

When you are working with layer styles such as the drawing pin, it's easier to use the Move tool to click on the pin and drag it across to the corkboard document rather than copying and pasting the pin layer, as this would mean you then have to click on the layer style and copy and paste this across as well.

01 Filter transformation Create a new document, 29cm high and 38cm wide (300ppi). Set the foreground colour to Red 190, Green 185 and Blue 140, and background colour to Red 87, Green 75 and Blue 50. Fill with the foreground colour. Choose Filter>Noise>Add Noise, check Gaussian and Monochromatic. Enter an Amount of 25. Choose Filter Pixelate>Crystallize at an Amount of 10.



02 Choose your cork colour Select Image> Adjustments>Levels and move the left and right sliders to meet where the pixels increase. Choose Image>Adjustments> Hue/Saturation and enter a Hue of -15, Saturation of +22 and Brightness of +2. You can blur the cork board and adjust the colour to suit. Add an Inner Shadow layer style as an extra step.

Expert Tip

Don't run into resolution problems

When you're creating many different elements in separate documents and bringing them across to your notice board document, make sure that they are all of the same resolution. Check this by choosing Image>Image Size and looking at the Resolution value. For example, if your notice board is at 300ppi and your postcard is at 72dpi it will appear blurry when you drag it across.

03 Place your photos Select your photos and copy and paste them into the corkboard document. Rotate and resize using Edit> Free Transform. You'll rearrange your photos later. To make them appear to be on top of the corkboard, double-click the photo layer, bringing up the Layer Styles window. Click Drop Shadow and alter the settings to suit the amount of shadow that you want.

04 Pin it up Create a new document measuring 8cm by 8cm at 300ppi. Create a new layer, choose the Elliptical Marquee tool and drag out the document while holding Shift to constrain the properties. Pick a foreground colour of Red 230, Green 217 and Blue 105, and fill the marquee using the Paint Bucket tool.

05 Copy our style Copy the style 'Drawing pin' from the disc to your Styles folder (found in the Presets folder of your Photoshop Applications folder). In Photoshop choose Window>Styles and it appears in the palette. Drag it from the palette onto the drawing pin layer. Delete the background layer. Drag the drawing pin layer across to your corkboard document to secure your photos.

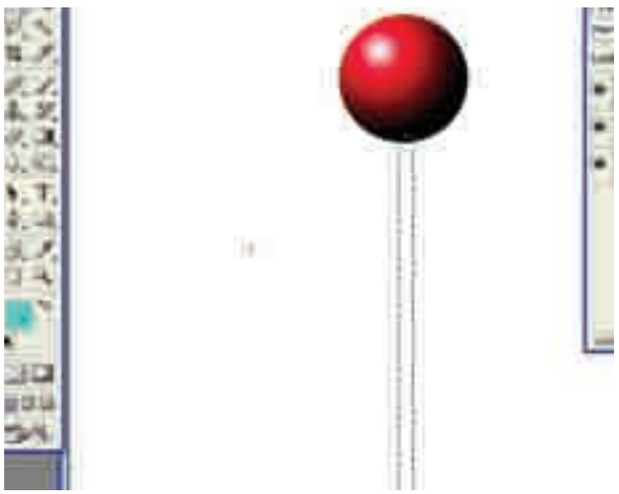
06 Further pin possibilities To make the second round-headed type of pin, create a new document measuring 15cm wide by 11cm high. You can change the size when it is pasted into the final document. Choose the Elliptical Marquee tool and drag while holding Shift to constrain the selection.

07 Customise your gradient Choose the Gradient tool. Pick Radial Gradient from the Options bar. Click the Gradient swatch in the Options bar, bringing up the Gradient Editor. Pick a three-coloured preset. Click the colour stop below the gradient's left, click the Color swatch and pick white. Repeat for the middle stop and make it red. Repeat for the right one; make it black.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7 AND ABOVE, PLUS PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3 AND ABOVE (FOR THE MOST PART!)

PIN IT DOWN

Create some shiny new pins



08 Shiny plastic effect Click OK and drag from above and left of the centre towards the bottom right of the pin head. Press Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect, create a new layer and move it beneath the pin head layer. Call it Pin Base. Choose the Rectangular Marquee tool and make a thin rectangular marquee below the pin head.

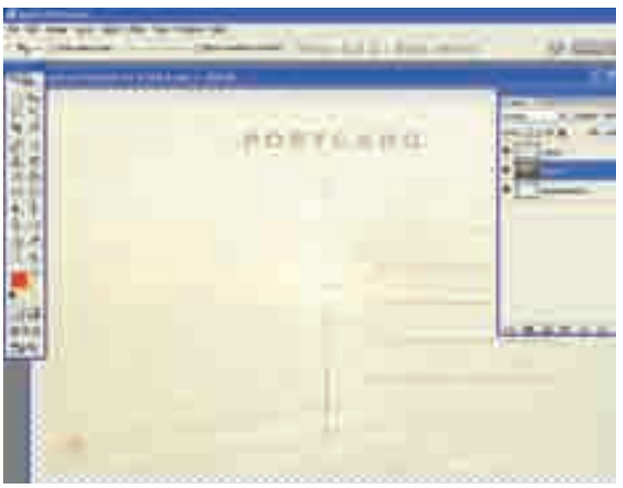
09 Pin-point precision Click the Gradient tool and choose Reflected Gradient from the Options bar. Click the Gradient swatch in the Options bar and use the same process as before to make the gradient go from white to black.

10 Take a different slant Hold Shift down while dragging the Gradient tool horizontally from the centre of the selection. Press Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect and Shift-click both the pin head and pin base layers to select them. Now choose Edit>Free Transform and rotate the pin so it is slanting, as we have done above. Delete the background layer.

11 Selective shading Select the pin base layer in the Layers palette. Choose the Burn tool and click just underneath the pin head, creating shading. Create a new layer below the pin base layer and call it 'pin shadow'. Zoom into the end, and with a small black brush draw around the pin end, making it appear to stick in the surface.

12 Cast a shadow Choose a soft black brush the width of the base (Opacity 100% and Flow 35%). On a new layer click the bottom of the pin base, hold Alt and click diagonally. Choose a brush the size of the pin head, click the top of the pin base shadow. Reduce the layer opacity. Choose Layer>Merge Layers and drag the pin to the corkboard document.

13 Time-saving template Open 'postcard' from the disc. The lines were created using the Line tool. If you want to create a personal touch, you can add a faint image to the postcard as a watermark. Open your chosen image and use the Move tool to drag it into the postcard document.



14 Watermark of wonder Choose Edit>Free Transform and resize your image to fit the document. Place the layer at the top of the Layers palette. Change the photo layer's blending mode to Overlay and Opacity to 80%. We used the Sun custom shape in the bottom corner, but you can experiment with other custom shapes and designs.

Tip

Alter your pin colour

If you want to make pins with different coloured heads, before flattening the layers of the pin document select the layer with the pin head on and choose Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Now move the Hue and Saturation sliders to select a different colour. Flatten as before and save each different coloured pin separately.

Expert Tip

Composition class

It helps to organise each area of your board, for example the photo and its corresponding text and pin, into folders. This makes it easier to drag and experiment with compositions. In terms of organisation, ensure that all photographs are not facing the same way, and check that the layer order is correct so they overlap as you want them to.

Font Resources

Text time

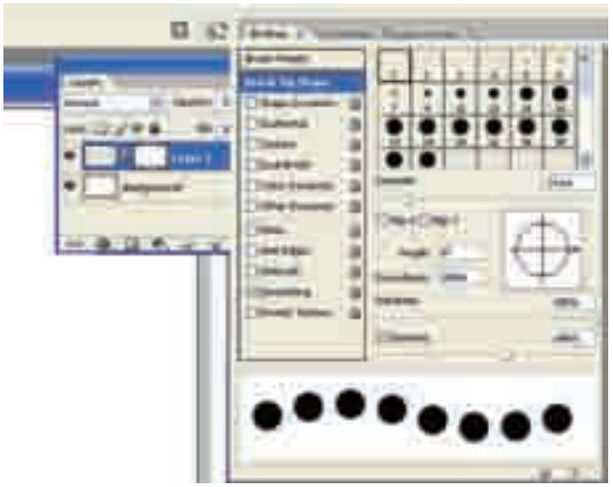
The text on the postcard was created using the font G-Unit. We have included this on the disc for you to use by placing it in your computer's Fonts folder. To create the text on your postcard, you can also use one of the fonts within Photoshop that is similar to handwriting, or download fonts from the Internet. Alternatively, you can write the text by hand and scan it in.

Dear diary

If you want to create the diary entry, open 'paper' from the disc and drag it across to the board. Rotate and resize the paper using Free Transform. Use the same font as for the postcard to write excerpts from a diary entry of the holiday. Choose a dark inky blue colour of low opacity, with a blend mode of Multiply for the text. Create another drawing pin to secure it by dragging the existing pin onto the Create a New Layer icon.

STAMP OF DISTINCTION

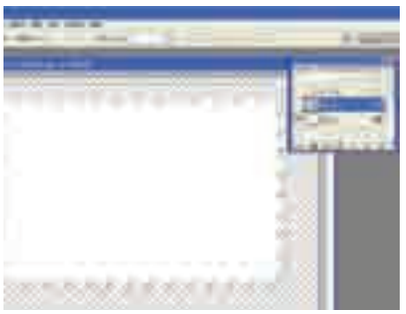
Add a global postal feel



15 Put your stamp on it Create a document of 6cm wide and 4cm high. Create a new layer. Click the Add Layer Mask icon in the Layers palette. Select the Brush tool, pick Window> Brushes and click the Brush Tip Shape tab. Enter a Diameter of 29px, Hardness of 100% and Spacing of 140. Press D, making the foreground black and background white.

16 The path to stamp success Choose the Rectangle tool, making sure Paths is selected in the Options bar. Draw a rectangular shape. Make sure Layer Mask is active by clicking it in the Layers palette. Choose Window>Paths. In the Paths palette click the small arrow in the top right and choose Stroke Path. Select Brush from the window that appears.

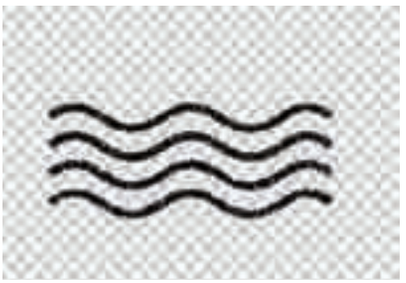
17 Load and fill your selection Click the Load Path as a Selection button in the Paths palette and click on the Layers tab to bring you back to the Layers window. The mask thumbnail will show the path you just created. Click on the layer thumbnail and not the mask thumbnail, and fill the selection with white using the Paint Bucket tool.



18 Stampy shadow Delete the background layer. To get rid of the faint black edging, click on the white area with the Magic Wand tool, choose Select>Inverse and hit Delete. Add a Drop Shadow layer style to this edging if you want to make the stamp appear more raised.

19 Incorporate holiday shots Add a photograph to the centre of the stamp edging. We also chose Filter>Distort>Diffuse Glow to add an artistic effect to the image. Select a prominent image from your holiday to add a personal touch, and experiment with filters. We also added text for the price and place of the stamp. Choose Layer>Merge Layers.

20 Custom shape creation Now you have finished your stamp, drag the merged layer across to your postcard. Place and resize it if necessary. To create the wiggly postal stamp, choose the Custom Shape tool and select the Waves shape from the Nature set. Create a new layer, make sure Fill Pixels is selected in the Options bar and drag out the shape.



21 Realistic faded stamp effect As an optional extra, copy the shape layer and use the arrow keys to move it down so there are four wavy lines instead of three. Shift-click both layers, right-click them and hit Merge Layers. Choose Filter>Sketch>Torn Edges and enter an Image Balance value of 33, Smoothness of 14 and Contrast of 23. Click OK. Reapply if necessary.

22 Place and perfect the stamp Choose Edit>Free Transform and rotate the stamp slightly. We made ours thinner too. Using the Move tool, place it over the stamp, making sure it's above it in the Layers palette. Fade the layer's opacity to 55%. Choose the Eraser tool on a 1px setting and cut randomly into the stamp, creating a more worn-away look.

ALERT | MAKE SURE THAT YOUR SHADOWS ALL POINT IN THE SAME DIRECTION FOR A REALISTIC EFFECT

THE AUTHENTIC TOUCH

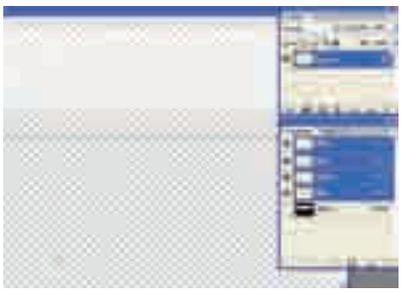
Building up the pinboard

23 Even more stamps! Create a new document measuring 8cm by 8cm. Create a new layer. Pick the Type tool and set the colour to black. Use the font Arial in size 18pt and enter Florida Post. Click the Create Warped Text button in the Options bar, pick Arc from the Style pull-down menu and enter a Bend of +100%.

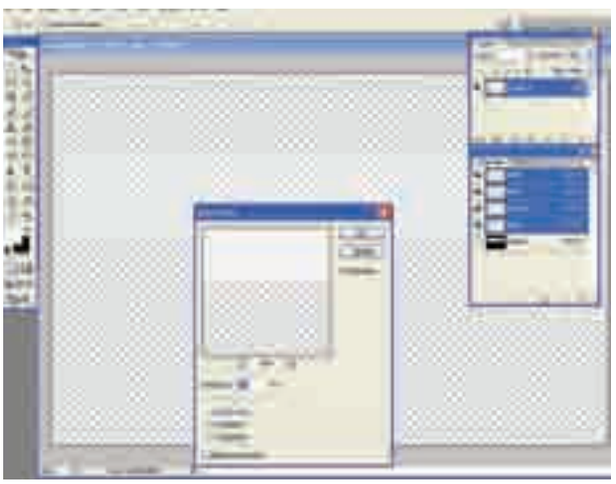
24 Enclose your text You may need to rotate the text slightly to make it level using Edit>Free Transform. Create a new layer, choose the Elliptical Marquee tool and drag it around the top of the text, holding Shift to form a circle. Choose Edit>Stroke and enter a Width of 10-15 px.

25 Use filters to fade Repeat this to create the bottom 'Florida' text but enter a Bend of -50 in the Warp Text window. Place the text below. Add the date across the centre. Delete the background layer, choose Layer>Merge Visible and apply the Torn Edges filter in the same way as before. Drag the layer to your postcard and reduce the opacity.

26 Stick it on Create a document 10cm wide, 3cm high. Create a layer and then delete the background. Pick Window>Channels. Click the icon to create a new channel. Create a rectangular selection using the Rectangular Marquee. Fill with white and deselect. Choose Filter>Pixelate> Crystallize, with a Cell Size of 10. Ctrl/Cmd-click the alpha channel in the Layers palette, creating a marquee.



27 Transparent technique Move across to your Layers palette and fill the selection with white. Change the opacity of the layer to 25-40%. Using the Rectangular Marquee tool, drag out a thin selection on the top of your tape and delete it. Repeat this for the bottom. This is because we only want rough edges for the two sides of the tape.



28 Styles and filters Double-click the tape layer, bringing up the Layer Styles window. Choose a Drop Shadow at 60% Opacity, 120 Angle, 11px Distance, 29% Spread and 2px Size. Go to Filter>Noise> Add Noise, check Uniform and uncheck Monochromatic. Enter an Amount of 24. Drag the tape layer to your corkboard document and reduce the opacity if necessary.

29 Finishing touches Add white titles and borders to your photos, making them look like postcards. We used the same technique as the postcard's postal stamp to create red stamps on the photos of places visited during the holiday. Experiment with different compositions by dragging the elements around and saving the versions to compare.

Produce Polaroids

Create a new document of about 10cm wide and 12cm high, open the photo you want to use and copy and paste it into the document. Pick Filter>Texture> Texturizer and apply it to the white background on a Relief setting of 2. Use the Move tool to position your photo and Free Transform to adjust the size. Add low opacity Drop Shadow and Bevel and Emboss layer styles to the photo layer, and as an optional extra add text. Merge the layers and copy across to the pin board document. Add a Drop Shadow layer style to the Polaroid layer.

NightScope plug-in

Produce an eerie night vision effect in a variety of images…

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Approximately 20 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Zoe Mutter

ON THE CD
NightScope plug-in

You can now get a great night vision effect without having to pay out for all the photographic gear and camera attachments.

NightScope is a free, easy-to-use filter with self-explanatory controls that can produce great results. The night vision effect is most commonly linked with the military invention that enables you to see in the dark, but the plug-in can be used in any type of image, eg landscapes or people.

NightScope works by removing the colour from the image and applying a slight blur that imitates the action of a camera trying to focus. You can then choose the amount of grain you'd like applied to the image, as well as the colour by mixing the red, green and blue channels. We've shown how to create a conventional green night vision effect, but you can alter this using the RGB sliders to achieve a strong overall colour cast. In addition to the sliders for grain and colour, you can change the EC or exposure compensation control.

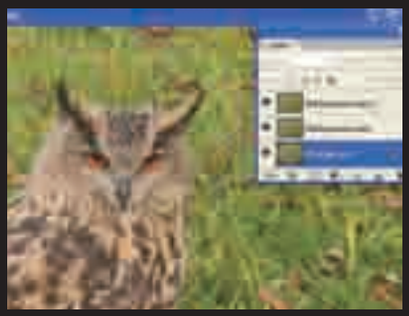
We've also shown how more than one application of the filter can enhance the effect, and how applying it to multiple layers set to different blending modes and opacities enhances the effect further.

NightScope works best with dark night-time photos with minimal areas of bright background elements in the scene, but we've proved that photos taken in daylight, such as our owl image, can also work well.

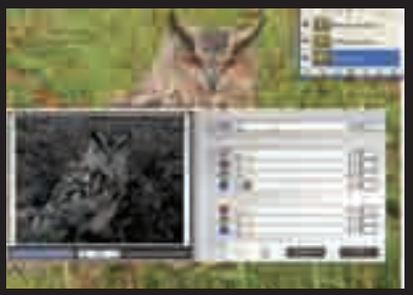
The plug-in is available for all, being both Mac and Windows compatible and at absolutely no cost. For more information, visit the site at **www.cybia.co.uk**.

NIGHT VISION NIFTINESS

Create great night vision results with minimal effort…



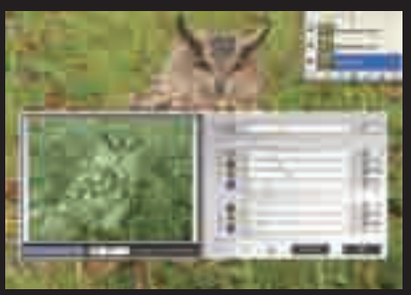
01 Layer it up Place the NightScope plug-in in the Plug-ins folder of your Photoshop Applications folder. Open Photoshop, then your image. Enhance the image using levels and crop to frame effectively if needed. Right-click and select Duplicate Layer. Repeat to create another duplicated layer that we'll use later.



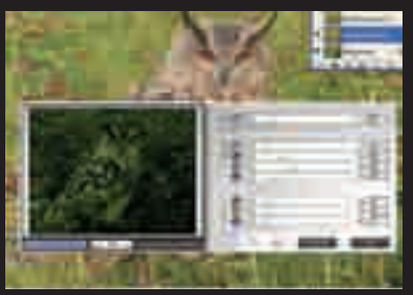
02 Choose your exposure Click the bottom layer. Select Filter>Fotomatic> NightScope to load the Filter window. The top slider labelled EC stands for Exposure Compensation. By adjusting this setting you can create very blown-out or darker night vision effects. We don't want our image to be too overexposed, so move the slider to a value of 72.

03 Grain gain The second set of sliders is used to adjust the grain of your image. As it's split into separate sliders, you can control the neutral, red, green or blue amounts of noise that are added to the photograph. We set the top neutral Noise slider to 45, the red to 64, green to 93 and blue to 39.

04 Slider experimentation We previously created a greenish effect, but by balancing the sliders differently you can achieve a range of different hues. The combinations of the four sliders are endless – for example, this is the effect created by increasing the red slider the most. The higher the amount of neutral noise (the top slider) the more grainy, pixelated and lighter the image becomes.

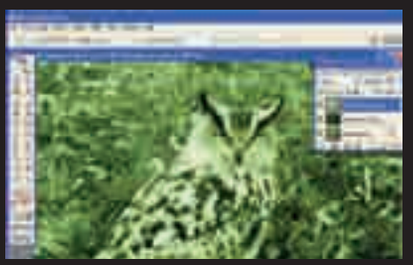


05 Countless colour combinations The bottom sliders are used to adjust the overall colour in the image. Similarly to the Grain sliders, you can mix and match the amounts of each colour until you have the perfect hue. We set the red slider to 19, the green to 28 and the blue to 6. Press OK for the filter to be applied. Turn the visibility of the top two layers off.



06 Filtering the duplicate layers The effect looks good but can be further enhanced with another application of the filter, so go to Filter>Fotomatic>NightScope, then press OK. Now select the duplicated layer above the filtered layer, turn its visibility on and load the filter again. This time change the top EC setting to 25 and the top neutral Grain setting to 18. Hit OK.

07 Slide it about Click on the second duplicated layer, which should be at the top of the Layers palette, to activate it and turn its visibility on. Load the filter again and enter 107 as the EC value. Move all the other sliders to 0 except the red Colour slider, which should be set to 19, the green to 56 and the blue to 6. Press OK to apply the filter to the layer.

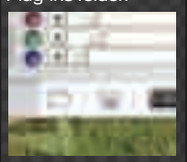


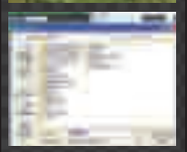
08 Blending techniques Now we've built up our layers of filter settings we'll start on blending modes. Leave the bottom layer on Normal. Click the second layer and change the blending mode to Hard Mix and its opacity to 5%. Click the top one and change it to Overlay and its opacity to 80%. Different combinations of filter settings, blending modes and opacities can achieve a variety of night vision effects.

Expert Tip

Loading and saving your filter settings

If you want to save your settings again to reapply the same night vision effect to other images, click on the Disk icon. This will save your settings as a preset with the NightScope setting file extension .nsc. To load these preset settings again, click on the Folder icon and locate them in your Photoshop Plug-ins folder.





Advice

Visit the advice centre for help with fixing photos, solutions to your image-editing problems and directions to helpful destinations on the web

Your expert panel…

GEORGE CAIRNS
A Photoshop user for many years, George can tackle any problem

ZOE MUTTER
Zoe's a keen photographer and a whizz at fixing common flaws in images

JO COLE
The web is awash with helpful sites, and Jo brings you the best ones out there

What you'll find in this section

Q+A
Get to the bottom of your image-editing woes in this part

PHOTOFIX
Send us your problem shots for advice on making them all better

RESOURCES
We guide you to the best websites for tutorials and instruction in using the Photoshop software

Send your questions to…

Post you questions to *Photoshop Creative* Q&A, Imagine Publishing Ltd, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ.

Alternatively you can email us at **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**.

Q+A

Let us sort out your image-editing quandaries

Mac vs PC

Q I'm debating whether to shift from a PC to a Mac, and am keen to buy my first copy of Photoshop for the platform pick. Are there major differences between Photoshop CS2 for the Mac and PC? I know the Mac version of Photoshop looks prettier but is that all there is to it?
Jenny Green

A By and large, Photoshop CS2 is the same on both platforms bar a few changes in the menu layout (apart from one cool feature that we'll get to in a minute). The Mac version has an extra item in the menu bar labelled Photoshop, but all this contains is a link to change Preferences and a few other features like Hide and Show Photoshop. The Mac interface may look more attractive than the generic PC layout, but as they say, looks aren't everything! The PC version boasts a unique and very useful extra feature that helps you create a leaner, cleaner and more efficient workspace. You'll find that feature by changing screen modes.

By default, Photoshop on both Mac and PC opens in Standard Screen mode, which presents the Photoshop workspace as a floating window. This lets you see files on your desktop at the same time as your Photoshop document and palettes. At the bottom of the Toolbox you'll see three icons representing the different screen modes. You can toggle between the different modes using the F key.

The PC's CS2 Toolbox has a useful link to the contents of the menu bar when in Full Screen mode

Press F to jump to Full Screen mode with Menu bar. This replaces desktop clutter with a clean grey background, enabling you to focus on editing your image without distraction from garish wallpaper etc. Press F again to jump to Full Screen mode. This is like sweeping all the clutter off your desk so you can focus on your work more effectively. The grey background goes black and even the menu bar vanishes, enabling you to make the maximum use of your monitor's screen space.

It's at this stage that the PC version shoots ahead of the Mac in functionality. If a Mac user wants to access a menu or sub menu from the menu bar, they need to come out of Full Screen mode. The PC user can stay in that mode all day, as there's a sneaky shortcut to all the main menus and sub menus lurking at the top of the Toolbox. This shortcut icon (a little triangle) only appears in the Toolbox when you activate Full Screen mode in the PC version of

Tip

If you're creating a digital painting, it's a good idea to create a special swatch full of the colours you will be using the most. You can keep this swatch to the side of your work area, and then easily pick colours as you work around your painting.

Dead centre

Find the centre point of any file

Sometimes it's handy to know where the exact centre of an image is. You may want to draw a shape that has a centre point in the middle of a page perhaps. Instead of guessing where the centre is, create a new layer. Draw a small circle a few pixels wide using the Elliptical Marquee tool and Edit>Fill the circle with black. With the circle's 'marching ants' selection marquee still active, Choose Edit>Copy then Edit>Cut. The circle will vanish. When you Edit>Paste the circle, it will appear at the dead centre of any document's work area.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS The Layer menu

	PC	Mac
New Layer	Shift+ Ctrl+N	Shift+ Cmd+N
Layer via Copy	Ctrl+J	Cmd+J
Layer via Cut	Shift+Ctrl+J	Shift+Cmd+J
Create Clipping Mask	Alt+Ctrl+G	Option+Cmd+G

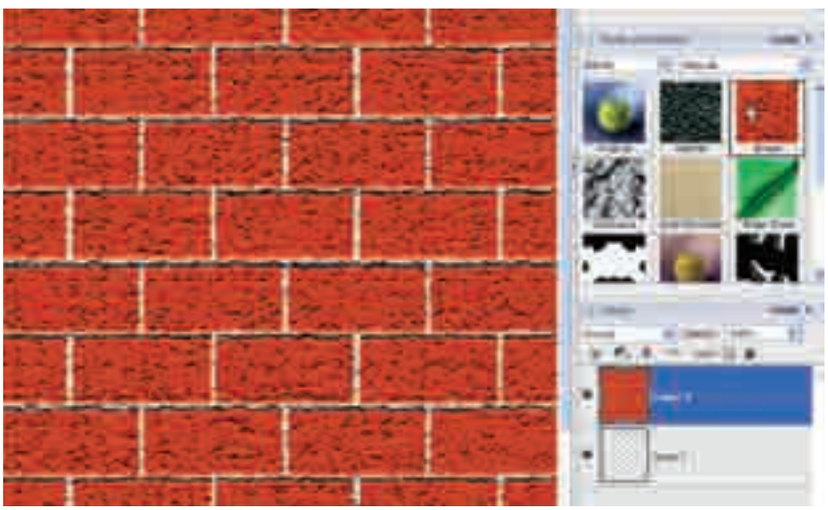
Photoshop. Simply click on the icon and you'll be able to access any of the hidden tools and commands from the main menu bar.

Brick by brick

Q I'm trying to create a brick-textured background for a design and can't be bothered to draw the bricks as I know there must be an easier way to do this. I've searched through all the thumbnails in the Patterns menu, but am shocked to see there's no bog-standard brick pattern.
Jason Nettleton

A What version of Photoshop are you using, Jason? If you've got Elements 4.0 then you're spoilt for choice when it comes to building bricks in a couple of clicks. We'll also show you a way to squeeze bricks out of CS2 with a bit of lateral thinking. Let's kick off with Elements.

Create a new file. Pop over to the Styles and Effects palette on the right. From the palette's first pull-down menu on the left, choose Effects. Now go to the pull-down menu on the right and choose the option labelled Textures. Scroll through the list



Build a brick wall in an instant without cement or a trowel, thanks to the power of texture effects in CS2 and ImageReady

Giving it large

Preview patterns more easily

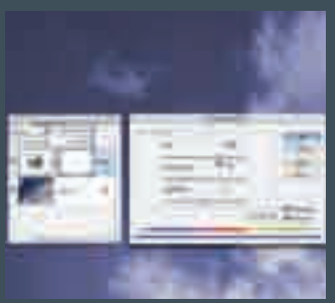
You'll probably be aware that you can increase the size of thumbnails in the Layers palette by clicking on the pop-up menu at the top right of the palette and going to the Palette options. You can also make it easier to preview patterns when filling the screen with a texture. Go to Edit>Fill and choose Use: Pattern. Click on the Custom Pattern icon in the Contents section of the Fill dialog box, and a menu of pattern thumbnails will appear. To make these more usable, click on the little triangle icon at the top right and choose Large Thumbnail.

MOON-KISSED CLOUDS

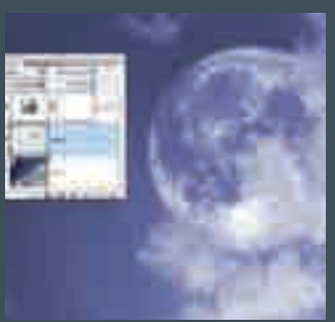
Atmospheric cloud effects

Q I'm trying to create the effect of moody moonlit clouds and am sure it'll be easier to fake the effect in Photoshop than shoot it for real. What's the best way to make the edges of my clouds glow as it they're being backlit by the moon?
Debbie Nostrom

A Photoshop can indeed give you moonlit clouds without the hassle of lugging a tripod on location. Nor do you need to experiment with aperture and shutter speed settings. You'll also avoid the unwanted attention of curious pub-goers. Follow the steps below to create this romantic effect during daylight hours, freeing you up to join those pub-goers when the moon rises.



01 Change hue Open a daytime-sourced cloud photo in Photoshop. To give the clouds a nocturnal colour temperature hit the Layers palette's Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon. Choose Hue/Saturation. Tick Colorize. A Hue of 233 will do the trick.



02 Full moon You can bash out a photorealistic moon in minutes using the cool LunarCell Photoshop plug-in from **www.Flamingpear.com**. Pop the rendered moon on a separate layer. To make it appear to be behind the clouds, use a blending mode such as Lighten.

03 Dodgy dealings Select the Dodge tool. Set its Range option to Highlights so it only brightens the clouds and not the sky. For a more subtle edit, set the tool's Exposure option to 16%. You can then gently stroke in burnt-out highlights on the edges of the clouds overlapping the moon.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS The Layer menu

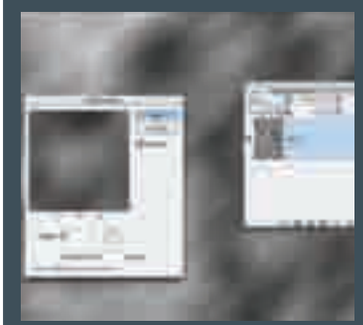
	PC	Mac
Group Layers	Ctrl+G	Cmd+G
Ungroup Layers	Shift+Ctrl+G	Cmd+G
Bring to Front	Shift+Ctrl+]	Shift+Cmd+]
Bring Forward	Ctrl+]	Cmd+]

HEAVY METAL

Make your mark in metal

Q Hi. Love the magazine – here's my question! I want to create the effect of text being stamped into a sheet of metal. I thought this would be a striking way of creating a logo with impact. Can you tell me how can I do this in CS2?
Mark Mills

A Photoshop's Layer Styles, a bit of layer blending and a little help from the Filters menu should enable you to stamp any text into a metal sheet. Let's see if we can fit all that into three steps!



01 Cloudy 'n cool In Filter>Render> Clouds fill a new layer with greyscale clouds. Go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Pick a Monochromatic Gaussian noise. Hit OK. Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Choose an Angle of 41º. This turns the noise into streaks of smooth polished metal.

02 Type your logo Pick the Text tool and type your logo using a chunky font in black. Set the blending mode to Linear Dodge. In the Layers palette hit Add a Layer Style and pick Bevel and Emboss. Set Technique to Chisel Hard and Direction to Down.

03 Add some curves Tweak the position of the light's angle to make the 3D text look as though it's sunk into the metal instead of being raised. To give the indentation more punch, turn on Contour and add a Cove – Deep curve preset to enhance the edge of your bevelled text.

of texture preview thumbnails and you'll discover one called Bricks. Drag the thumbnail onto the main work area and your screen will be filled with a red brick texture in seconds.

If you're using CS2 you're correct – there isn't a similar brick texture in the Patterns menu. The Texturizer filter does offer you the chance to add a brick-shaped texture to a coloured layer, but the result isn't really inspiring or realistic. With a little lateral thinking, you can build a screen of bricks without breaking into a sweat.

Click on the Jump to ImageReady icon at the bottom of the Toolbox. Click the Styles palette's tab to bring it to the front (or go to Window>Styles). Click the little Palette options arrow at the top right of the palette and (as in Elements 4.0) scroll down to Textures.

You can replace the default style with these textures or append them to the existing list. Scroll down the list of texture previews until you come to Brick Wall. To get the texture to fill your work area you need to create a new layer (or unlock the flattened background layer). Drag the Brick Wall preview thumbnail to the main work area and a tiling texture will fill your document with bricks. Click Edit in Photoshop at the bottom of the Toolbox, and you can edit the file from the Photoshop interface.

Cool clipping

Q Some of Photoshop's tools and menus refer to clipping. What is it and can it help with photo fixing?
Nichola Field

A If you adjust an image's contrast or levels you can clip existing colours. This means that details in the image can be lost in the shadows or the highlights. All the colours in your photos are created by combinations of reds, greens and blues. Photoshop gives each pixel a value between 0 for pure black and 255 for pure white. The value of your colour RGB pixels is also confined to the 0 to 255 range. If you open the Info palette (Window>Info) and move the cursor around the image, you can see the mix of RGB values for different pixels. A blue sky's pixels will have more value in the blue channel and less in the others, giving a reading in the Info palette such as R: 64, G: 67, B: 98.

If pixels stay within the 0 to 255 range they will have detail. If you underexpose a shot it'll have more shadows with a value of 0. These shadows have no detail as they're pure black.

When adjusting an image's contrast, avoid clipping your shadows or highlights by using a clipping preview mode

A little magic

More effective extractions

Photoshop Elements 4.0's Magic Extractor lets you isolate and remove complex shapes from a busy background far more effectively than CS2's standard Extract filter. The Magic Extractor instructs you to click a few times on the object you want to keep using the Foreground Brush (B), then click on the background pixels you want to remove using the Background Brush (P). To make a more effective extraction, try scribbling over the areas that you want to keep instead of simply clicking, so Elements 4.0 has more information to work with.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS The Layer menu

	PC	Mac
Send Backward	Ctrl+[	Cmd+[
Send to Back	Shift+Ctrl+[	Shift+Cmd+[
Merge Layers	Ctrl+E	Cmd+E
Merge Visible	Shift+Ctrl+E	Shift+Cmd+E

Overexposed highlights with a value of 255 also lose detail and appear as pure white. By clipping an image during the editing process you're giving pixels a value of 0 or 255 and losing detail in parts of the image.

Fortunately, Photoshop gives you plenty of ways to avoid clipping when making image adjustments. We've covered using Levels before, but there's an extra tool hidden away to preview clipped pixels during a Levels adjustment. Go to Image>Adjustment>Levels. You'll see the image's pixels represented as a graph that has a scale of 0 to 255. Under the graph are three triangles – a black one for adjusting shadows, a grey for midtones and a white triangle for highlights. You can drag the black shadow triangle to the right to darken existing pixels. If you hold down the Alt key when dragging the slider, the main image will change to a clipping warning mode. Parts of the image that'll be clipped and lost will appear as a garish colour, enabling you to re-adjust the slider to avoid clipping too much shadow detail. This technique also enables you to spot and avoid highlight clipping.

You can also avoid clipping when editing Camera RAW images in CS2 and Elements 4.0. At the top of the RAW editor you'll find tickable Shadows and Highlights boxes. When these are ticked you'll see all the clipped highlights in red and the clipped shadows in blue. By seeing clipped pixels during the editing process you can create images with a healthier tonal range and maintain important picture details as well.

Blowing bubbles

Q I've tried to get a decent photo of a floating soap bubble, but it's difficult. Either it bursts or the camera focuses on the background, making the bubble look blurry. Is there a Photoshop filter to create a colourful floating bubble?
Andrew Quaid

A Start with a suitable source image for your bubble to float against. Ideally the photo will have some detail in it, as half the illusion will be created by distorting the background image. Create a new layer and select the Elliptical Marquee tool. Hold down the Shift key and click and drag to draw a perfect circle. To create texture for your bubble go to Filter>Render>Clouds. This will fill the circular marquee with a fractal greyscale cloud pattern. The fractal pattern looks flat and two-dimensional. To give it depth and volume go to Filter Distort>Spherize. The default amount of 100% will create a convincing 3D shape.

To give the bubble's greyscale pattern a colourful rainbow-style texture, go to Image> Adjustments>Gradient Map. This tool pushes a gradient through the shadows, midtones and highlights of the cloud texture. In the Gradient Map dialog click on the Gradient Editor. Pick a colourful rainbow-style Spectrum gradient from the list of presets. Hit OK to apply the Spectrum gradient to your greyscale bubble and it'll burst into colour. Apply a little Gaussian Blur to soften the bubble's texture.

At this stage the bubble's colours will be too vibrant. Set the bubble layer's blending mode to Soft Light to see the background more clearly. Reduce the opacity as well (around 63% should do it). To give the bubble more presence, select it by right-clicking its thumbnail and choosing Select Layer Transparency. Now click on the background layer's thumbnail. Go to Filter> Distort>Spherize and distort the background by 73%. This makes the bubble appear to be acting like a lens, with light from the background curving as it passes through the bubble.

To help define the bubble's shape and make it stand out from any background, select it. Go to Edit>Stroke. Stroke a four-pixel wide line around the selected outline, and voila – a bubble that no one can burst!

By combining a variety of Photoshop filters with a gradient map you can create beautiful bubbles in minutes

Book Resources

If you're looking to improve your digital photography skills, get hold of The Book of Digital Photography by Chris George. It costs £20 and there's a full review next issue!

Bridge it

View files more effectively

CS2 users can use Adobe Bridge as a standalone application, so they don't need to access Bridge from within Photoshop (or even have Photoshop running!). You can use the Bridge interface to organise your image and text files, move them into new folders and rename them, for example. You get a much clearer and larger preview of your thumbnails using Bridge than you would using the view options in the Mac's Finder or the PC's Windows Explorer. Click on the icon at the top right of the Bridge interface to switch it to a very handy Compact mode.

Cool curves

Edit shadows

When you adjust an RGB image's levels using the Curves dialog box to make the shot lighter or darker, you can inadvertently change the value of the colours in the image as well as its contrast. To limit the changes to the black pixels, go to Image>Mode>CMYK Color. Instead of only three channels you'll now have access to an extra Black channel, enabling you to tweak the black levels without altering colours.

Mini Bridge

Shrink the Bridge

Once you've jumped to the Bridge's Compact View (see 'Bridge it'), you'll discover a new icon that lets you shrink the bridge even more. This is the Switch to Ultra-Compact Mode icon. When you click on it the Bridge interface will collapse to a floating strip so that it rests above any other open files. This means the Bridge can always be on-screen and close at hand without getting in the way of your general image-editing workflow. Click on the Full Mode icon to restore the Bridge to its former full-screen glory.

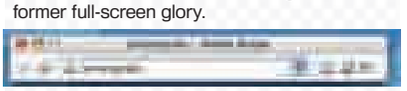


PHOTO FIX

Send in your troublesome images for us to fix…

Send your problematic photos on a CD to:

Photo Fix, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ

Unfortunately we cannot return CDs

Fancy framing

Enhance an already impressive image using artistic yet simplistic framing techniques…

Creating a frame around your image can add interest and make your photograph look more prominent. But why do frames need to be straight and dull?

By introducing a layer mask and filters you can convert your border from run of the mill to king of the hill. The frame possibilities are endless, because you can also experiment with any of the fantastic selection of Photoshop filters to create different artistic frame effects. By varying the settings for these filters, it's also possible to alter the extremity of your border effect.

If you have a particularly atmospheric photograph, selecting the correct filter for your frame is vital to ensure the mood is consistent throughout. For example, in our tranquil boat photograph the subtle Spatter filter is perfect at producing a delicate edging effect to the image.

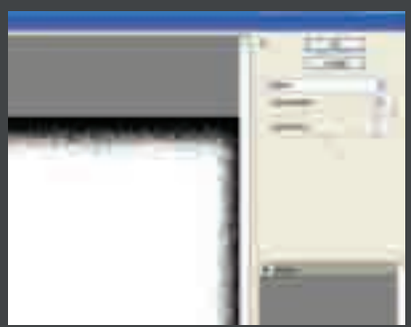
Now there's no reason for you to opt for basic borders ever again.

BANISH BORING BORDERS

Become more inventive with the framing of your images

01 Prepare frame area Open the image. If it's cropped and you want more canvas round the edge, go to Image> Canvas Size; enter a bigger height and width. Right-click the layer thumbnail in the Layers palette, pick Duplicate Layer; name it 'boats'. Hit New Layer in the palette, move it below the boats layer and name it 'background frame'.

02 Select and mask Choose Edit>Fill and pick Black in the Use pull-down menu. Choose the Rectangular Marquee tool. You can also use the Elliptical Marquee tool or create a selection using one of the Lasso tools. Make your selection, which will act as the frame shape. Select the boat layer in the Layers palette and click the Add Layer Mask button.



03 Blending the other images Make sure the layer mask thumbnail on the boats layer is selected by clicking it. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. We chose an Amount of 20, but it depends on your image and frame size. This creates a gradual transition. Now select Filter>Brush Strokes> Spatter. We entered a Spray Radius of 25 and a Smoothness of 7 for quite an extreme effect.

Tool School

Accurate frame creation

When creating the shape of your frame using the Rectangular Marquee tool, if it's not centred or positioned as you like, you can make minor adjustments by using the arrow keys to move it by small increments.

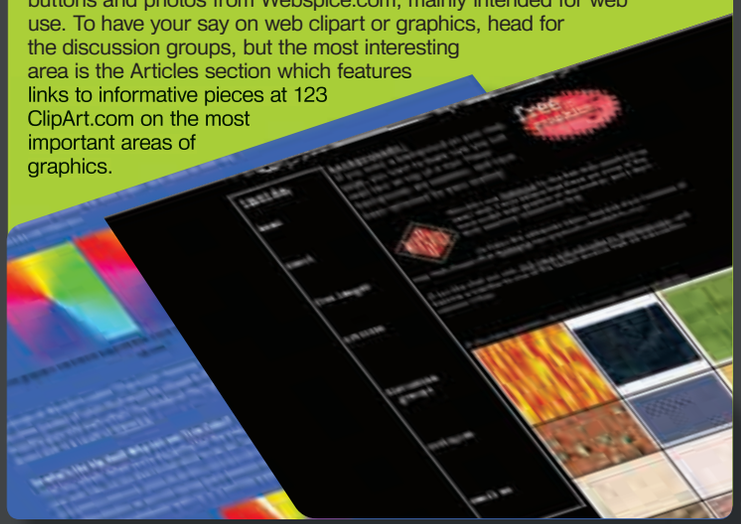
RESOURCES

Our latest collection of Photoshop offerings from the World Wide Web…

WEB CLIPART

www.webclipart.com

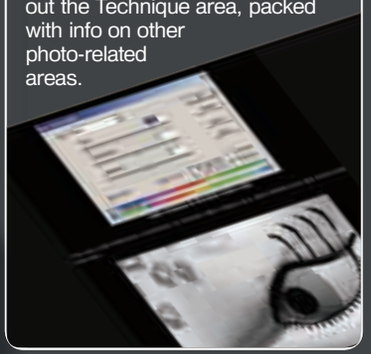
From its title you'd think this site features mainly clipart, but it far exceeds this. It's mainly geared towards creating graphics for the web, but the techniques listed can be adapted to non-web projects. There are also links to free clipart animations and images including arrows, buttons and photos from Webspice.com, mainly intended for web use. To have your say on web clipart or graphics, head for the discussion groups, but the most interesting area is the Articles section which features links to informative pieces at 123 ClipArt.com on the most important areas of graphics.



DIGITAL OUTBACK PHOTO

www.outbackphoto.com/workshop/photoshop_corner/photoshop.html

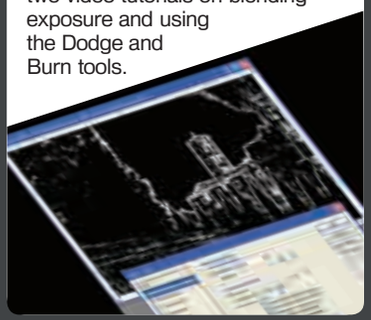
Some of these tutorials are for older versions of Photoshop but are still useful. The site covers photography using digital SLRs, but Photoshop has a dedicated page as it's central to enhancing photos. Also check out the Technique area, packed with info on other photo-related areas.



THE LIGHT'S RIGHT STUDIO

www.thelightsrightstudio.com/digital-darkroom.htm

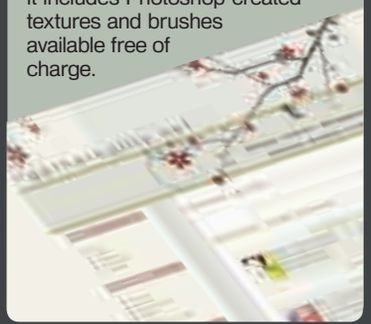
This site boasts great learning galleries with tutorials as well as images that can be downloaded. Lessons include creating a low-key lighting effect, skin softening and improving sharpening skills. You can download free actions, scripts and tool presets, and there are two video tutorials on blending exposure and using the Dodge and Burn tools.



AETHEREALITY

www.aethereality.net/tutorials.php

Aethereality is really attractive and informative. It has 20 tutorials – a mix of Photoshop and Paint Shop Pro. Techniques include converting stamps to brushes, creating sketched images and producing gel text. The selection combines graphics-based, text and photography-related lessons. This site is not only useful for tutorials; it includes Photoshop-created textures and brushes available free of charge.



22PIXELS (AND 22PIXELS FLOCK)

http://22pixels.com/flock.php

On the site 22pixels.com there's a resource that all Photoshop users must download. Flock is a file containing over 300 files, including 153 fonts and 158 brush packs, plus Custom Shapes, Styles and Textures. In each pack there are about 40 presets that will self-install, coming to a grand total of over 7,000 presets. Not bad for downloading a single file absolutely free! While you're downloading, have a look around the 22pixels.com site, which is created by artists for artists.

ACTIONCENTRAL

www.atncentral.com

This site focuses on the exchange of actions between Photoshop users and image editors. There are also areas on books, new programs and plug-ins. The Downloads section has a long list of actions split into the categories of basic image enhancements, eg sketch actions, frames and sharpeners and correction tools. Write-ups for each action let you know exactly what effect the action will have before you download. The handy Tutorials section has action-related information plus Photoshop lessons.

eMag

creative reviews

Discover if the Brother MFC-820CW is the perfect all-in-one for you and whether the Colour Confidence Studio XR can get your colour calibration back on track

Hardware review

Brother MFC-820CW 82

Software review

Colour Confidence Studio XR 84

Book reviews

Digital Collage and Painting 86
The Fundamentals of Photography 87
The Computer Cartoon Kit 87
Landscape and Nature Photography with Photoshop CS2 87

Brother MFC-820CW

"An oddly-attractive all-in-one with solid printing functions"

CHECK IT OUT! | VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.PSHOPCREATIVE.CO.UK

HARDWARE

Brother MFC-820CW

This all-in-one from Brother promises to be all things to all people. Will you make it part of your family?

info

COMPANY
Brother

WEB
www.brother.co.uk

PRICE (SRP)
£245.58

OPERATING SYSTEMS
Mac and PC

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Windows 98, ME, 2000, XP or XP Professional

Mac OS 9.1 and OS X 10.2.4 or later

When it comes to choosing an all-in-one device, chances are that Brother is the last manufacturer you think of. After all, the company has a reputation for office equipment and sewing machines – not necessarily consumer goodies. But it has a surprisingly wide range of machines that would suit home Photoshop users down to the ground, so we gave this all-in-one a test run.

Brother's pedigree in the world of business is obvious when you first see the MFC-820CW. While other manufacturers favour sleek design and inviting curves, Brother has opted for a functional, blocky look. All the buttons you need are on the front panel, with a small screen for viewing pictures when printing from a memory card (it accepts SmartMedia, Compact Flash, Memory Stick and Memory Stick Pro, Secure Digital, xD Picture Card and Multimedia Card). You feed the paper in through the front, with an extendable paper tray folding neatly out of sight when not in use. The printer runs on four individual cartridges (black, yellow, magenta and cyan), and you can see how much each cartridge has left, thanks to some icons on the screen.

Setting the MFC-820CW up wasn't any problem. All the instructions are presented in a straightforward printed manual, along with estimated times for how long certain steps could take. Not everything is explained in the manual, though. For example, when we went to try the scanner out, we found that the instructions were on the owner's manual CD. And as sod's law would have it, this was the

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK…

Further examination of the MFC-820CW

The MFC-820CW boasts a pretty healthy list of functions and options. Here's a closer look at the most important ones…

See before you print
This screen allows you to view photos when printing from a memory card, and also displays options for other modes.

Direct printing
You can print your photos directly from your camera's memory card. Most formats are catered for, so you shouldn't have any problems.

Common options
These are your main option buttons for navigating through menus and deciding what mode to work in, plus the power save.

one thing we had packed away, so we got a bit annoyed. But this is a minor grumble.

So what can you do with it once you have all the instructions? Well, there's a scanner with a maximum resolution of 600 x 2400dpi. This performed perfectly well, producing decent images in good time. You also get a colour copying function, with a maximum resolution of 1200 x 1200dpi. Brother obviously still hopes this product will appeal to the business market, as the machine comes with a wireless and wired network facility as standard. Users can also enjoy a colour fax mode, which may not be at the top of most people's list, but will no doubt be useful to some.

For most of the time, though, you'll probably want to use the machine for its print function. In our tests the printer performed quite well. With a maximum resolution of 1200 x 1200dpi, you can enjoy good quality images. Print time is nice and quick and the MFC-820CW doesn't make too much noise.

We did experience a couple of problems, though. A cyan colour cast blighted our early printouts. This disappeared from later printouts, so could have been something to do with the installation of the ink cartridges, even though all tests showed they were correctly installed. But to be fair, the later printouts without this cast were pretty much spot-on. All the colours were evenly balanced and the shadows and highlights were adequate.

We tried printing a variety of formats on a variety of papers, and the best results came with photo-sized prints on photo paper. There was occasional banding on larger printouts, which is a real shame because you can print borderless A4 sheets to really show off your images. It is very small banding, though, and could only be seen on vast areas of solid colour.

One thing that did impress us with the printer was ink consumption. We printed out an awful lot of photos and digital art, which were all rich in colour (in fact we used the printer to test all the papers in our feature on page 16). Even after this heavy workout, the ink gauge looked as though hardly any ink had been used at all. This is great for those on a budget who can't pay out for ink cartridges.

There is a lot on offer with this printer, and we have to admit that we quite liked the square design. It's just a shame that the print quality wasn't more consistent. On the whole the printouts were great, but there were a couple of rogue ones that exhibited small banding. You did have to look very closely to see it – but it was there all the same.

ALL IN ONE PACKAGE

The MFC-820CW from Brother has a lot of different functions that will meet the needs of most users. Here's a closer look…

Colour display You can print directly from your camera's memory card. This screen lets you view the photos and select which ones to print.

Paper feed You load your paper in the front, and the tray slides back in for a seamless edge.

"ONE THING THAT DID IMPRESS US WAS INK CONSUMPTION. THE INK GAUGE LOOKED AS THOUGH HARDLY ANY INK HAD BEEN USED AT ALL"

Load it up
The paper is fed through the front and there is a slider to make sure that different paper sizes sit snugly.

Scan and deliver
Lift up the top lid and position your document. You can also take advantage of the Scan and Translate option for working with text.

The inner workings
To change ink cartridges or plug in cables, you need to flip back half the machine. This is held up by a foot – kind of like a car bonnet!

PROS

- Does pretty much anything you can think of
- Quiet and quick operation
- Oddly attractive design

CONS

- Occasional colour cast on printouts
- Not all instructions on printed manual

VERDICT

7.5

A solid machine that was let down by the occasional printing blight

SOFTWARE

info

COMPANY
Colour Confidence

WEB
www.colourconfidence.com

PRICE (SSP)
£99

OPERATING SYSTEMS
PC and Mac

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Windows 98SE, 2000, ME, XP

Mac OS X version 10.2 or higher

LCD, CRT or laptop monitor

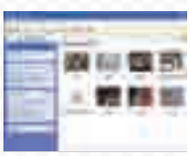
Colour Confidence Studio XR

An affordable monitor-profiling package, but not as straightforward to use as we had hoped…

DETAILS

Take a closer look...

In addition to the Kodak manual, a Colour Confidence Guidance for Photography PDF document is included.


The Check-Up Kit has seven images printed from a perfectly calibrated machine so you can make quick comparisons.

The compact Optix XR costs more if bought on its own than the entire Colour Confidence Studio XR package.

The Monaco Optix XR is easily attached to the computer via USB and placed on the front of the monitor.

With Studio XR, Colour Confidence offers a complete package, combining monitor colour profiling with increased understanding of the subject. The package costs £99, so if you're considering buying Monaco Optix (costing £119) you're better opting for Studio XR and making a saving.

Before using the software ensure you know details of your monitor and its environment, such as white point, ambient lighting, gamma, brightness and contrast settings; incorrect info could worsen your monitor display.

The central part of the package is the Monaco Optix XR which rests on the monitor and builds profiles for CRT, LCD and laptop screens. Setting up the device was easy, but we had difficulty using the software. It was a lengthy process, as contrast and brightness needed to be adjusted manually many times and checked to see if it fell in an acceptable range. The first time we used the device the monitor appeared dark. In the manual, and not the on-screen steps, it was briefly mentioned to set the screen display to grey. When running the software again, spending longer readjusting the brightness and contrast, the monitor's appearance improved.

In the Kodak kit are seven images (also on the disc) printed from a machine with a correctly calibrated monitor, allowing you to see how your display compares. As lighting conditions affect the viewing of a print, a RHEM Strip is included to check conditions are adequate. If stripes appear in the strip, light is insufficient. These weren't visible even in dark conditions, but this could be due to a faulty testing strip.

A useful document in the Kodak Check-Up Kit is the Colour Confidence Guidance for Digital Photography. This has info on the importance of ICC profiles and sections on digital colour and monitor characteristics.

The package's documentation was valuable and the device produced successful results, but they weren't as easily achieved as expected.

PROS

- Easy to attach and initially set up the device
- Available for both platforms and multiple monitor types

CONS

- Wizard not as easy to use as other monitor calibration products
- Screen appeared a little dark when we first used the wizard software

VERDICT

7.0

Includes a lot for the price, but the wizard software was hard to use

eMag

BOOKS

Digital Collage and Painting

Expand your digital creative abilities using this inspirational guide

This is an extremely packed and hefty guide, bursting with exciting ideas and covering the techniques involved in creating stunning digital pieces of art.

It's applicable to both Photoshop and Painter users, and is stuffed with loads of helpful techniques used to create innovative artistic effects with both applications. Even if you only use one of the packages, it's still well worth reading to be inspired by the remarkable methods that are used to produce such fantastic results.

Twenty-one artists share the tricks and techniques they used to create the masterpieces showcased in the Inspiration section of the book. The work featured is visually stunning, resembling traditional works of art, which should provide you with more than enough inspiration for your own creative projects. Just some of the projects featured include painting in Photoshop with your photos, creating panoramas and using the filters to great effect.

Within the Experimentation section, suggestions are made of ways you can push your creative boundaries and combine elements such as drawings and photography for really interesting effects. The projects included not only help you produce fantastic-looking digital artwork, they also teach you some complex areas of Photoshop, eg masks and transparency.

Digital creativity at its best This guide encompasses all the areas involved in achieving a fantastic digital painting or collage in an approachable manner.

Quality artwork The artwork featured is both vibrant and large enough to be appreciated, having full pages dedicated to the most impressive pieces of work.

info

AUTHOR
Susan Ruddick Bloom

PRICE
£27.99

PUBLISHER
Focal Press

ISBN
0-240-80705-7

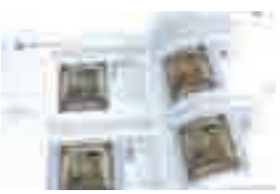
BRING OUT YOUR ARTISTIC SIDE

Find out how this book can help unleash the artist inside you

Amazing artists A selection of inspiring artists' work is featured, and each describes the techniques used to create their masterpieces.

Transform your photos The main areas of Photoshop that will enhance your work, eg blending modes and filters, are covered in full.

Painter techniques If you've only used Photoshop, this book will show you how artistic effects are created in another application.



Step-by-step Even the creations that appear to be the most complex are split up into easy-to-follow step-by-step tutorials.

Pull-out panoramas An entire chapter focuses on panoramic effects, and a pull-out section boasts impressive panoramic vistas.

NOTES | LET US KNOW IF THERE'S A TYPE OF PHOTOSHOP BOOK YOU'D LIKE US TO REVIEW – JUST EMAIL PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

The Fundamentals of Photography

Ensure your photography skills are up to scratch with help from this useful guide

info

AUTHOR
Helen Drew

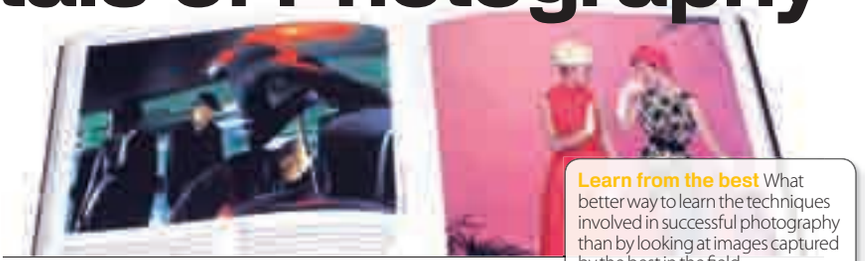
PRICE
£17.95

PUBLISHER
AVA Publishing

ISBN
2-88479-050-0

The best way to get great results in Photoshop is by first perfecting your photography skills. This book is ideal if you want explanations of key topics within both film and digital photography. The glossary contains key photographic terms – each stage is covered, including equipment, lighting, genre, processing and printing. But if you're looking for a Photoshop manual this isn't the book to choose, as it's only mentioned in the digital processing chapter.

Composition, arranging of elements and framing are also featured. The 'Breaking the Rules' section is a must-read, featuring unusual techniques for achieving exciting results. Whatever your area of photographic interest, this guide has something to suit.



Learn from the best What better way to learn the techniques involved in successful photography than by looking at images captured by the best in the field.

FIRST STEPS

Learning the fundamentals

Try something different Turn to Breaking the Rules to be inspired by ways to get amazing effects.

Digital manipulation You'll also learn how to enhance images in Photoshop and make them more artistic.

Tradition You'll find out how the Dodge and Burn technique is achieved in traditional photography.

Variables There are many possible adjustments. This shows the effect achieved by altering shutter speed.

The Computer Cartoon Kit

Learn the tricks of the trade behind creating crazy cartoon strips

info

AUTHOR
Steve Marchant

PRICE
£14.99

PUBLISHER
Ilex Press

ISBN
1-904705-86-3

We featured *Manga Clip Art* a few issues ago, and this book takes much the same approach. Whether you have no artistic talent or are hugely gifted, this book has something to offer.

The included CD features over 100 cartoon images of people, objects and locations for you to use to create your own cartoon works of art. The balloons and blank comic strips on the disc can be customised and adjusted to suit your individual comic story.

The Computer Cartoon Kit successfully combines plenty of info covering all stages of the process from basic storytelling and scripting right through to what fonts to use and printing your work. And even though there are more than enough examples of cartoon images and layouts throughout the book, you'll also learn complex techniques involved in comic strip creation such as choosing different viewpoints for your panels, special effects and ways to polish up your finished strip.

Landscape and Nature Photography with Photoshop CS2

A beautifully presented guide full of essential info for amateur and expert nature photographers alike

info

AUTHOR
Rob Sheppard

PRICE
£22.99

PUBLISHER
Wiley

ISBN
0-471-78619-5

Nature is a very popular area of photography, so guides like this one are treasured resources of many photographers. Commonly encountered problems are covered, eg correcting lens distortion, removing colour haze and using correct exposure when shooting for Photoshop, in addition to an exploration of the fantastic effects Photoshop can produce. An invaluable element is the vast amount of expert tips and notes on nearly every page.

Keen nature photographers will also gain inspiration from the beautiful examples of outdoor photography, which are accentuated with the help of Photoshop's tools. With step-by-step tutorials complete with large images of the settings, it's easy to work your way through and experiment with the techniques.

Exhibit

Gather round and get ready for another terrific collection of entries to the Readers' Challenge. Did you get picked? Read on and find out…

After the heavily-themed space fest that was issue ten's challenge, we decided to go for a more random selection of photos for issue 11.

The seemingly unrelated images of a woman, a couple of trees, a bridge and two Chinese statues still seemed to appeal to your sense of creative adventure, though, and there were some lovely entries. But it was also good to see images from older challenges appear – remember there's no deadline on any of the challenges so you can submit your entries whenever you've finished them.

The winner this issue used images from issue ten, and we were really impressed with how Steven turned the cliff and ruin photos into a moody and atmospheric moonlit masterpiece. But a big thumbs up also goes to Michael Nunn for his liquified creation, Neil Potter for his homage to paint by numbers and Victoria Payne for her fantasy vision. It's also great to see the humorous approaches to the task, namely George Boyce, Alan Douglass and Craig Eccles.

Turn to page 98 for this issue's challenge and then get sat down in front of that computer and impress us with your Photoshop skills!

Steven Bryant

Challenge

Steven has created a really great effect here, taking the cliff and ruin images from issue ten's challenge and manipulating them into a dramatic seascape. By turning the scene into a night-time one, he has allowed himself to have fun with moon and cloud effects, as well as directing plenty of attention on the lone lighthouse. Well done!

Get your work featured

If you'd like to share your work with other readers, send your pictures in to us and you could be featured on these pages. Just pop your images onto a CD and send to:

Exhibit, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ, UK

Alas, we can't return any CDs. If your entry is under 2MB, you can email it to **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**

JP Placella

A Crisis in Vines

"For this challenge I was going for the effect of having the flowers taking over the city and their vines putting a crushing squeeze on the buildings."

Michael Nunn

ExplorEYESation

"I've incorporated a lot of detail in my pic. I used the Sketch filter to create an almost urbany comic atmosphere and I'm particularly proud of the border I created using the Marquee and Fill tools."

Doug Pusey (top left)

Girl

"I applied several filters to the girl image, including Colored Pencil and Neon Glow. I then copied and pasted the image and used Transform to get the infinity effect."

Kevin (right)

Womantwil

"I have used various filters and blending modes in this image. The dragon's skin was created with the stained glass textures."

Exhibit

Richard Calibo

Lost

Richard describes himself as "a self-made artist interested in the enhancement and manipulation of photos into an art form", which sums up this interesting and effective piece to a tee!

Jacob Cavallaro

Graffiti Thief (below)

"I used a portion of the rock structure to manipulate the face of the butterfly. For the night scene I simply turned the midtones down and used a lens flare to turn the light on.

Victoria Payne (left)

On the Threshold of a New Life…

"The young girl is in front of her future. What will await her – a nice family home, a career, will it be a flight to success? Only time will tell…"

George Boyce

Gone Fishing

"The expression on the statue's face suggested a feeling of contentment and was ideally suited to the water scene from issue nine's Challenge images. I added the rod, the rod reflection and a simulated lily, formed from the flower image."

Turn to page 98 and enter this issue's Readers' Challenge

Craig Eccles

I Love Dragons

"Please find the attached entry for your Readers' Challenge in issue 11 of *Photoshop Creative*. The idea that a stone Buddha would have a stone dragon as a pet just hit me as soon as I saw the pics that we were given to use. Just used the Pen tool for selecting and the Liquify tool for the dragon's neck. Smoke was made by painting white and then running the Blur/Distort filters a few times. Main thing is my wife likes it… which makes a pleasant change as I don't usually do 'fun' pics."

Neil Potter

Untitled

Neil's obviously taken inspiration from issue 11's cover and added a paint by numbers effect to the photo of the woman. She fades out very effectively and we really like the film frame. The little touches make all the difference!

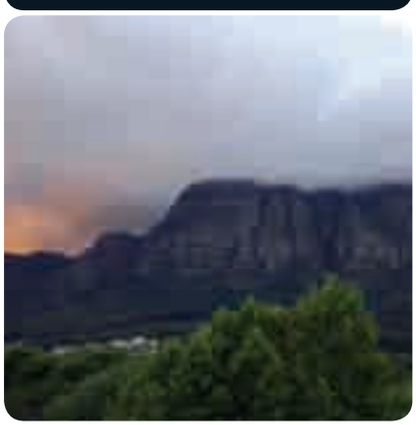
Alan Douglass (right)

Untitled

"Pretty obvious picture, I hope. Yelloweye is looking for his lost lunch. I am 76 and seriously retired. I love the magazine. Keep up the good work."

WIN! FLUID MASK PLUG-IN WORTH £179

Enter our challenge and see your work in the magazine!



Readers' Challenge

Feel like taking your fellow readers on in a creative challenge? Here's where to do it

Sometimes it can be difficult getting the old creative juices flowing, but one thing that's always guaranteed to generate sparks of imagination is a bit of healthy competition. Which is precisely what this section's all about!

For those new to the mag, we supply you with a selection of photos each issue and it's your job to do something wonderful with them. As you can see from previous entries in the Exhibit section, there's no limit on the style or how you use the photos. You can even bring some of your own resources into play – all we ask is that you use at least one of the supplied images.

So what will you do with this lot? Maybe cut up the photos to make a montage, or merge elements together to create a realistic composition. Perhaps you'll apply some techniques from the tutorials. There's no deadline, so take as long as you like.

HOW TO ENTER

Access the Readers' Challenge folder from the side panel on our CD and copy it to your desktop. Once you've completed your masterpiece, send it to us on a CD along with your name, address and a few words about your creation, to:

Readers' Challenge
Photoshop Creative
Imagine Publishing
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset, UK
BH2 6EZ

NOTES | IF YOUR ENTRY IS UNDER 2MB, YOU CAN EMAIL IT TO US AT **PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK**. UNFORTUNATELY WE CAN'T RETURN CDS

Chalk effects

Give your family photos a creative boost by applying a chalk effect. Choose your brushes wisely and you will be rewarded with a beautifully textured and effective result. See how we created our cover by turning to page 26.